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JARGAL

A NOVEL BY

VICTOR HUGO

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH BY

CHARLES EDWIN WILBOUR

TRANSLATOR OF LES MISÉRABLES

With Illustrations by F. A. Beaucé

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PREFACE.

In 1818 the author of this book was sixteen years old; he wagered that he would write a volume in a fortnight. He composed *Bug-Jargal.* Sixteen is the age at which we wager about everything and improvise upon everything.

This book, therefore, was written two years before *Hans of Iceland.* And although, seven years later, in 1825, the author recast and rewrote it in great part, it is none the less, both in plot and in many incidents, the author's first work.

He begs pardon of his readers for placing before them details of so little importance; but he thought that the few who love to classify by progress in growth and by order

of birth the works of a poet, however obscure he may be, would not be offended with him for giving them the age of *Bug-Jargal;* and, as for himself, like those travelers who turn back in the midst of their way and seek to discover once more in the foggy folds of the horizon the place from whence they set out, he would here call to mind that period of security, boldness and assurance, when he undertook so immense a theme: the revolt of the blacks of San Domingo in 1791, a struggle of giants, three worlds interested in the fray, Europe and Africa as the foes, America as the field.

March 24, 1832.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

THE following episode, founded upon the revolt of the slaves of San Domingo in 1791, has a circumstantial manner,[1] which would have been enough to prevent the author from publishing it. A sketch of the work, however, having already been printed, and distributed in a limited number of copies, in 1820, at a time when the politics of the day were very little occupied with Hayti, it is evident that, if the subject he treats has since acquired a new degree of interest, it is not the fault of the author. Events have arranged themselves for the book, not the book for events.

Be that as it may, the author did not dream of withdrawing this work from the kind of twilight in which it was enshrouded; but being apprised that a publisher in the capital proposed to reprint his anonymous sketch, he thought he ought to forestall that reprint by bringing out his work himself, reviewed, and, to a certain extent, recast; a precaution which saves his pride as an author from a shock, and the publisher aforementioned from a bad speculation.

Several distinguished persons who, either as colonists or as functionaries, were concerned in the troubles of San Domingo, having learned of the approaching publication

[1] This preface, which accompanied the first editions, was written in January, 1826.

of this episode, have been kind enough to communicate to the author materials which are the more precious, as most of them have never been published. For this the author here tenders them his grateful thanks. These documents have been singularly useful to him in correcting what the narrative of Captain D'Auverney left incomplete in respect of local coloring, and uncertain as regards historic truth.

In conclusion, he ought also to inform the reader that the story of *Bug-Jargal* is only a fragment of a more extensive work, which was to have been composed under the title of *Tales of the Tent.* The author supposes that, during the wars of the Revolution, several French officers agree to while away the long nights of bivouac, each in his turn, by the recital of some one of their adventures. The episode now published was a part of that series of narratives; it can be detached without inconvenience; and besides, the work of which it was to form a part has not been finished, never will be, and is not worth finishing.

Pen-Sc.

JARGAL.

CHAPTER I.

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When it came the turn of Captain Leopold D'Auverney, with an air of surprise, he assured his comrades that he really could recall no event of his life which might lay claim to their attention.

"But, Captain," said Lieutenant Henri, "still, it is said that you have been a traveller, and seen the world. Have you not visited the West Indies, Africa, Italy, and Spain? —— Ah, Captain, your lame dog!"

D'Auverney started, let his cigar fall and turned suddenly toward the entrance of the tent, at the moment that an enormous dog came limping to his side. As the dog passed, he crushed the cigar; the Captain heeded it not. The dog wagged his tail,

licked his master's feet, uttered many a faint whine, and, after several sorry attempts at antics and gambols, came and crouched before him. The Captain, with deep emotion, caressed him mechanically with his left hand, while with the other he loosened the glazed strap of his gorget, repeating from time to time,

"You here, Rask! you here!"

At length he exclaimed,

"But who brought you back?"

"By your leave, Captain ——"

For some moments Sergeant Thaddeus had been standing at the uplifted curtain of the tent, his right arm enveloped in the folds of his overcoat, his eyes moistening with tears, watching silently the denouement of this Odyssey. As it drew near its close he ventured these words:

"*By your leave, Captain* ——"

D'Auverney raised his eyes.

"You, Thad! and how the devil could you do it? —— Poor dog! I thought him in the English camp. Where did you find him?"

"Thank God! I am as happy, Captain, as that little nephew of yours was, when you first set him to decline '*cornu*, a horn; *cornu*, of a horn ——'"

"Never mind that, but tell me, where did you find him?"

"I did not find him, Captain, although I went in search of him."

The Captain rose and extended his hand to the Sergeant; but the Sergeant's hand still remained enveloped in his overcoat. The Captain did not observe it.

"The fact is —— you see, Captain, since poor Rask was lost, I perceived, by your leave, if you please, that you seemed to miss something. To tell you the truth, I believe that very evening that he did not come back, as usual, to share my ration, old Thad came very near crying like a baby. But no, thank God! twice only in my life have I shed tears; the first time when ——, the day when ——"

The Sergeant looked at his Captain hesitatingly.

"The second was, when it struck the fancy of that odd and merry Balthazar, corporal in the seventh demi-brigade, to make me tear the hides off a bunch of onions."

"I think," exclaimed Henri, as he burst into a loud laugh, "that you omitted to tell us on what occasion you first wept."

"Was it not, my old friend, when you were dubbed first grenadier of France, by Latour D'Auvergne?" asked the Captain, affectionately, still caressing the dog.

"No, Captain; if Sergeant Thaddeus could shed

tears, you will acknowledge that it could have been on that day only when he shouted '*fire*' upon Bug-Jargal, sometimes called Pierrot."

A cloud passed over the features of D'Auverney. Quickly approaching the Sergeant, he made an effort to grasp his hand; but notwithstanding so great an honor, old Thaddeus still kept his arm hidden beneath his overcoat.

"Yes, Captain," continued Thaddeus, retiring a few steps, while D'Auverney fixed his eyes upon him with a painful expression, "yes, I shed tears that day; yes, he was worthy of a man's tears. He was black, it is true, but gunpowder is black too, and —— and ——"

The honest Sergeant was racking his brain to find a noble finale for his whimsical comparison. There was something in this approach to a simile which pleased his fancy, but he essayed in vain to give it utterance; and after charging, so to speak, many times upon his idea at every vulnerable point, like a general repulsed from a fortified post, he suddenly raised the siege and continued, unmindful of the smiles of the young officers who were listening.

"Do you recollect, Captain, this poor negro when he arrived, all out of breath, at the very moment that his ten comrades were brought forth? Yes, they were already bound —— I had command of

the platoon. And when he unbound them himself to take their place, though they refused; but he was inflexible. O, what a man! He was a real Gibraltar. And then, Captain, when he stood there, as if he were going to lead off a dance, and his dog, the same Rask who is here, who knew what was going to be done and seized me by the throat ——"

"Thad," interrupted the Captain, "you do not usually pass over that part of your story, without bestowing a few caresses on Rask; see, how he looks at you!"

"You are right, Captain," answered Thaddeus, with embarrassment, "poor Rask is looking at me, but —— old Malagrida used to tell me it was a bad sign to pat a dog with the left hand."

"And why not use the right?" asked D'Auverney, with surprise, for the first time observing the arm enveloped in the overcoat, and the paleness of Thad's face. The embarrassment of the Sergeant seemed to increase.

"By your leave, Captain, the truth is —— You already have a maimed dog; I fear you are also to have a maimed sergeant."

The Captain started from his seat.

"How? What? What say you my old Thaddeus? Maimed! Let's see your arm. Maimed! Good God!"

D'Auverney trembled; the Sergeant slowly unrolled his cape, and offered to the eye of his Captain his arm wrapped in a bloody handkerchief.

"Oh! my God!" murmured the Captain, as he carefully raised the bandage. "But tell me, my old friend, how ——?"

"O, it is a very easy matter. I told you that I saw your uneasiness since those cursed English stole away from us your noble dog, poor Rask, his dog ——. Enough, enough; I resolved to fetch him back again to-day, should it cost me my life, so that I might eat supper to-night with a good appetite. So, after giving your soldier, Mathelet, orders to give the best polish to your best uniform, as to-morrow is the day of battle, I stole quietly out of camp, and, with only my sabre, took my way across the hedges, to reach the English camp by the shortest cut. I had hardly gained the first outposts, when, by your leave, Captain, I discovered in a little copse upon my left a riotous troop of the redcoats. Crawling up to spy out their business, without their catching a glimpse of me, I discovered in the midst of them Rask bound to a tree, while two John Bulls, naked as two Hottentots, were boxing away at each other's bones, and making as great a racket as the bass-drums of a demi-brigade. They were two English privates, fighting for the ownership of

your stolen dog. The moment Rask saw me, he gave such a pull to his collar that the rope snapped, and in a twinkling the fellow was at my heels. As you might imagine, the troop did not long stay behind. I plunged into the wood; Rask followed. Many a bullet whistled past my head. Rask barked; but happily they could not hear him for their own noisy outcry of '*French dog, French dog!*' as if your dog was not a splendid San Domingan dog. Never mind; I crossed the thicket, and was just coming out of it, when two redcoats presented themselves to me. My sabre rid me of one of them, and would doubtless have delivered me from the other, if his pistol had not been loaded with ball —— You see my right arm. Never mind; *French dog* fell upon his neck like an old acquaintance; the Englishman fell strangled, and I think he found it a rough embrace. Now, why should that devil of a man be as eager to catch me as ever a beggar was after a *Seminarist?*"

"Well, Thad has got back to camp again, and Rask too. I am only sorry that God did not keep that ball to send me in the battle to-morrow, that's all."

The face of the old Sergeant darkened at the thought of not having received the wound in battle.

"Thaddeus!" cried the Captain, in an irritated

tone; then he added less harshly: "Why were you so foolish as thus to expose your life for a dog?"

"It was not for a dog, Captain; it was for Rask."

D'Auverney's countenance relaxed. The Sergeant continued,

"For Rask—his dog ——"

"Enough, enough, my old Thad!" exclaimed the Captain, raising his hand to his eyes.

"Come," added he after a short pause, "lean upon my arm and come to the quarters of the surgeon."

After a moderate resistance, Thaddeus yielded. The dog, who during this scene had in his joy half gnawed through a fine bearskin of his master's, sprang up and followed them.

CHAPTER II.

This episode had awakened the liveliest curiosity in the breasts of the mirthful story-tellers.

Captain Leopold D'Auverney was one of that class of men, who, upon whatever round of the ladder fortune or the fluctuations of society may have left them, always inspire a high degree of respect and interest. There was nothing, however, in his appearance that would impress at first sight; his manners were cold and his features indifferent. A tropical sun, while bronzing his face, had failed to give him that vivacity of gesture and conversation which is found in the Creole, united with a nonchalance that is frequently full of grace. D'Auverney was a man of few words, rarely a listener, but always seemed ready for action. First upon his horse, and the last in his tent, he seemed to seek in bodily fatigue diversion from his thoughts. Upon the early wrinkles of his brow, these thoughts had engraven their sad severity. They were not of that kind of which men can rid themselves by communication, nor of that species which, readily mixing

in frivolous conversation, are soon absorbed in the ideas of others. Leopold D'Auverney, whose physical powers the arduous labors of war could not subdue, seemed to experience an insupportable fatigue in what are termed the encounters of wit. He shunned controversy as he courted battle. If he occasionally allowed himself to be drawn into a dispute, he would throw out a few sentiments, full of good sense and solid reason, and then, at the very point of convincing his adversary, would stop suddenly, saying: "*What is the use?* ——" and go out to ask his commander what could be done, while awaiting the hour for the charge or the assault.

His comrades pardoned his cold, taciturn and reserved habits, for they found him on every occasion brave, generous and benevolent. The lives of many of them he had saved, at the risk of his own, and they had learned that, though his lips were rarely opened, his purse at least was never closed. Beloved by the army, he was even forgiven for making himself venerated.

Still he was young. Though supposed to be about thirty, he lacked many years of that age. Notwithstanding he had been fighting now for some time in the ranks of the Republican army, his adventures were unknown. The only being, besides

Rask, who ever elicited from him any lively demonstration of attachment, was the noble old Sergeant Thaddeus, who had with him entered the corps, and never left him. Thaddeus sometimes told a few vague particulars of his fortunes.

It was known that D'Auverney had suffered great reverses of fortune in the West Indies; that having married in San Domingo, he soon after lost his wife and all his relatives in the massacres which marked the progress of the Revolution in that magnificent colony. At this period of French history, reverses of this character were so common that they elicited a kind of universal sympathy, in which all seemed ready to assume and bear a part. But Captain D'Auverney was less commiserated for the losses he had suffered, than for his manner of supporting them. In fact, beneath his icy indifference, the quiverings of an internal and incurable wound were sometimes seen.

From the commencement of a battle his brow would appear calm. During the action he was as intrepid as if he was seeking to become a general; after victory he was as modest as if his highest desire were to be a private in the ranks. His comrades, observing his contempt of honor and advancement, could not comprehend why, before a battle, he seemed to be expecting something, not divining

that D'Auverney, amid all the chances of war, had but one wish—death.

On one occasion the National Representatives commissioned to attend the army nominated him brigadier-general upon the field of battle: he declined the honor, because by separating from his company it would be necessary to part with his Sergeant Thaddeus. A few days after he offered to head an expedition of great danger, from which, contrary to universal anticipation, and his own wishes, he returned. He was then overheard to regret his former refusal of promotion, "for," said he, "since the enemy's cannon always spares me, the guillotine, which strikes all who rise, might perhaps have demanded my head."

CHAPTER III.

Such was the man whose history, when he had left the tent, gave rise to the following conversation:

"I'll wager," exclaimed Lieutenant Henri, wiping from his red boot a large spot of mud which the dog had left upon it as he hobbled by, "I'll wager that the Captain would not exchange his dog's lame foot even for those ten baskets of Madeira we had a glimpse of the other day in the general's wagon."

"Tut, tut!" said Aid-de-camp Paschal, gaily, "that would be a bad bargain. I know something about that matter; the baskets are now empty, and," he added in a serious tone, "thirty bottles with their corks out would, you will confess, Lieutenant, be of less value than the paw of this poor dog, out of which at least could be made a little bell-handle."

The gravity with which the Aid-de-camp pronounced these last words convulsed the company with laughter. The young officer of the Basque-

Hussars, Alfred, who alone had not joined in the merriment, exclaimed with an air of chagrin,

"I do not see, gentlemen, any great subject of mirth in what has passed. This dog and this Sergeant, whom I have seen about D'Auverney ever since I have known him, appear to me to be objects that should excite some interest. Indeed, this scene ——"

Provoked by the chagrin of Alfred and the gay humor of the rest, Paschal interrupted him,

"This scene is very sentimental. What does it amount to? A dog recovered and an arm broken!"

"Captain Paschal, you are wrong," replied Henri, tossing the bottle he had just emptied out of the tent; "this Bug——, or so-called Pierrot, has awakened my curiosity extraordinarily."

Though half inclined to be angry, Paschal was appeased on observing that his glass, which he thought empty, was full. D'Auverney returned and resumed his seat without uttering a word. He seemed thoughtful, but his countenance was more composed. So absent-minded did he appear to be that he heard nothing of what was said around him. Rask, who had followed him, lay down at his feet and watched him anxiously.

"Your glass, Captain D'Auverney. Try this."

"Thank God!" said the Captain, thinking that

he was answering a question from Paschal, "the wound is not dangerous — the arm is not broken."

The involuntary respect which the Captain inspired in all his companions in arms alone restrained the laughter that was ready to burst from the lips of Henri.

"As you are no longer apprehensive for Thaddeus," he replied, "and we are all assembled here to shorten this long night of bivouac by relating our several adventures, I hope, my dear friend, you will redeem your promise by telling us the history of your lame dog and of Bug——, I don't know what, or Pierrot, this genuine Gibraltar."

To this desire, expressed in a half-serious, half-jesting tone, D'Auverney would not have responded, had not all joined their entreaties to those of the Lieutenant. At length he yielded to their solicitations.

"I will endeavor to gratify you, gentlemen, but you must expect only a hasty narration of a very plain event, in which I play but a subordinate part. If the attachment which exists between Rask, Thaddeus and myself, has led you to anticipate something extraordinary, I warn you that you have deceived yourselves. I will begin."

Silence was instantly restored. Paschal emptied at one draught his glass of brandy, and Henri

wrapped himself in his bearskin for protection against the chill night air, while Alfred ceased humming his favorite Galician air, *mata-perros*.

D'Auverney mused for a moment, as if to call to mind events long since replaced by others; at length he began, slowly, almost in a whisper, and with frequent pauses.

CHAPTER IV.

"THOUGH born in France, I was sent in my early years to San Domingo, to an uncle, a colonist of great wealth, whose daughter I was to marry.

"The residence of my uncle was near Fort Galifet, and his plantations occupied the larger portion of the plains of the Acul. This unfortunate position, the mention of which may seem to you unimportant, was one of the primary causes of the disasters and destruction of my family.

"Eight hundred negroes cultivated the immense domains of my uncle. I must confess that the pitiable condition of these slaves was rendered still worse by the insensibility of their master. My uncle belonged to that class of planters, fortunately limited in numbers, whose hearts had been hardened by a long-continued habit of despotism. Accustomed to be obeyed at the first glance, the least hesitation on the part of a slave was punished with the severest treatment, while the intercession of his children frequently served only to increase his

anger. Upon such occasions we could usually do no more than meliorate in secret the misfortunes we could not prevent."

"Here is sentiment for you!" said Henri, in an undertone, leaning toward his neighbor. "I hope the Captain will not let the misfortunes of the *ci-devant blacks* pass without an incidental dissertation upon the duties which humanity imposes, and so forth. I'm sure it would not have been omitted at the Massiac Club."[1]

"I will thank you, Henri, to spare me your ridicule," coldly observed D'Auverney, who had understood him. He resumed:

"Among all these slaves one only had found favor with my uncle. He was a Spanish dwarf, a griffe[2] in color, who had been presented to him by Lord Effingham, Governor of Jamaica.

[1] Our readers have no doubt forgotten, that the *Massiac* Club, of which Lieutenant Henri speaks, was an association of *negrophiles*. This club, formed in Paris upon the outbreak of the Revolution, had instigated most of the insurrections which at that time burst forth in the colonies.

Some may perhaps be astonished at the bold levity with which the young Lieutenant rallies the *philanthropists* who at that period reigned by the grace of the executioner. But we must recollect that before, during and after the Reign of Terror, freedom of thought and speech found refuge in the camp. This noble privilege occasionally cost a general his head, but the dazzling glory of those brave soldiers is freed from all reproach by the fact that the informers of the Convention sneered at them as the "*Messieurs of the Army of the Rhine.*"

[2] An accurate definition of terms will perhaps be necessary to the understanding of this word. M. Moreau de Saint Méry, developing the system of Franklin, has classed in generic species the different tints which the mixture of the colored population presents. He supposes man to form, by the union of whites with whites and blacks with blacks, a totality capable of division into one hundred and twenty-

"My uncle, who, during a long residence in Brazil, had contracted the habit of Portuguese ostentation, loved to surround himself with a retinue correspondent to his wealth. Numerous slaves, dressed in livery like European servants, gave his house the appearance of a baronial castle. That nothing might be wanting, he had dubbed Lord Effingham's slave his fool, in imitation of those old feudal princes who kept jesters at their courts. The griffe Habibrah (this was his name) was one of those singular beings, whose physical conformation is so strange that they would appear to be monstrous if they were not ridiculous. This hideous dwarf, fat, short and pot-bellied, moved about with extraordinary rapidity on a pair of slender, weak legs, which, when he sat down, folded under him like the legs of a spider. His enormous head, deeply sunken between his shoulders, bristled with red frizzly wool, and was set off by a pair of

eight parts. Proceeding on this principle, he affirms that an individual is near or distant from either color, as he approaches or recedes from the sixty-fourth term, which constitutes the proportional mean. According to this system, every man who is not eight parts white is accounted black. From black to white nine principal stocks are distinguished, with intermediate varieties according to the greater or less number of parts which they retain of one or the other color. These nine species are the sacatra, the griffe, the marabout, the mulatto, the quadroon, the mongrel, the mamelouc, the quateronne and the sang-mêlé. The sang-mêlé, continuing its amalgamation with the white blood, is finally lost in it. We are assured, however, that there is always perceptible on a particular part of the body the ineffaceable trace of its origin. The griffe is the result of five combinations, and may possess from twenty-four to thirty-two parts white blood, and from eighty-six to one hundred and four black.

ears so large that his comrades were accustomed to say that Habibrah used them to wipe his eyes when he wept. His face was always a grimace and always changing: a singular mobility of features which at least gave his ugliness the advantage of variety. My uncle liked him for his uncommon deformity and his unalterable gaiety. Habibrah was his favorite. While the other slaves were over-burdened with labor, Habibrah had no other care than to bear behind his master a large fan of bird-of-paradise feathers to keep off the flies and mosquitoes. Seated on a rush mat at my uncle's feet, the dwarf always received upon his own plate the remains of his master's favorite dishes. Habibrah, to manifest his gratitude for so many favors, made use of his buffoon's privilege, his right to do everything and say anything, only for the diversion of his master, setting off his thousand silly remarks by contortions, and at the slightest signal of my uncle he would run with the agility of an ape and the submission of a dog.

"I did not like this slave. There was something too cringing in his servility, and if slavery does not dishonor, servitude debases. I felt benevolent sympathy for those unhappy negroes whom I saw toiling all day, with scarcely as much clothing as might conceal their chains; but this deformed

buffoon, this fawning slave, with his ridiculous dress variegated with lace and spotted with little bells, awakened in me nothing but contempt. The dwarf never employed the influence which his servility had gained over their common patron for the benefit of his brethren. He had never besought pardon from a master who so often inflicted severe punishment, but was even overheard one day, when he thought himself alone with my uncle, urging him to redouble his severity towards his own unfortunate comrades. The other slaves, however, who would have been supposed to look upon him with distrust and jealousy, did not appear to hate him. On the contrary, he inspired them with a degree of respectful fear, far removed from hostility, and when they saw him passing about among their cabins, with his huge pointed cap ornamented with tiny bells, on which he had traced strange figures in red ink, they would say to each other in a whisper, 'He is an *obi*.'[1]

"These minutiæ, gentlemen, to which I have called your attention, at that time occupied my thoughts but very little. Completely absorbed in the unmingled emotions of a love across which nothing seemed destined to pass, a love felt and shared from childhood by the woman who was

[1] A sorcerer.

allotted to my arms, I gave little heed to anything which was not Marie. Accustomed from my tenderest years to regard as my future bride her who was already a kind of sister, there had sprung up between us a fondness, the nature of which will hardly be understood when I describe it as a commingling of fraternal devotedness with impassioned elevation of soul and conjugal confidence. Few men have passed their early years more happily than I; few have felt their souls expand into life under a more lovely sky, and under the influence of a concord more delicious with happiness in the present and hope for the future. Surrounded almost from birth with all the luxuries of opulence, with all the privileges of rank in a country where color suffices to confer it, passing my days near the being who possessed all my love, beholding this love encouraged by our relatives who alone could have thwarted it, and all this at an age when the blood dances in the veins, in a land where summer is eternal and nature is wonderful: was there anything wanting to complete my blind faith in my happy star; was there anything wanting to give me a right to say, 'few men have passed their early years more happily than I?'"

The Captain hesitated a moment, as if words failed him at these recollections of happiness.

Then he continued, in a tone of deep melancholy:

"It is true that I have now a still better right to add, that no one could pass his latter days more miserably."

And then, as if he had gained strength from the intensity of his grief, he continued in a calm voice:

CHAPTER V.

"It was in the midst of such illusions and such blind hopes that I reached my twentieth year. It would be completed in the month of August, 1791, and my uncle had fixed upon this period for my union with Marie.

"You will readily conceive that the prospect of such speedy happiness absorbed all my faculties, and how indistinct my recollection must be of the political controversies which had for the two previous years been agitating the colony. I will not therefore detain you with the stories of Peinier, nor of M. de Blanchelande, nor of the unhappy Colonel Mauduit, who met so tragical a fate. Nor will I depict the rivalry of the Provincial Assembly of the North with the Colonial, which assumed the title of General Assembly, imagining the word colonial to savor of slavery. These miserable contentions, which then carried away all minds, have now no interest except through the disasters which they produced. For myself, amid these mutual jealousies which divided the Cape and Port-au-

Prince, if I held any opinion it was of course in favor of the Cape, as we dwelt within its limits, and in favor of the Provincial Assembly, of which my uncle was a member.

"On a single occasion I chanced to take an active part in a debate upon the affairs of the day. It was on the occasion of that disastrous decree of May 15th, 1791, by which the National Assembly of France admitted free people of color to an equal participation in political rights with the whites. At a ball given in Cape Haytien by the Governor, a number of young colonists were speaking vehemently of this enactment, which so deeply mortified the vanity, perhaps well-founded, of the whites. I had not yet mingled in the conversation, when I saw a rich planter approaching the group, who was hardly admitted in white society, and whose equivocal color threw suspicion on his origin. Advancing hastily toward this man, I addressed him aloud:

"'Pass on, sir; things are being said here which would be disagreeable to you who have sang-mêlé in your veins.'

"This imputation irritated him to such a degree that he sent me a challenge. We were both wounded in the duel. I was wrong, I confess, in this provocation, and it is probable that what we

term *the prejudice of color* would have been insufficient to drive me to the step, but this man had for some time past dared to raise his eyes toward my cousin, and when he received that unexpected humiliation from me, he had just been dancing with her.

"Be that as it may, I watched with rapture the approach of the hour when Marie would be given to me, and I saw nothing of the constantly increasing effervescence which kept all men about me in so violent an agitation. Gazing intently on my approaching felicity, I was blind to the fearful cloud which already nearly covered our political horizon, and which, when it burst, was to uproot all existing things. Not that any, even the most timid, seriously anticipated a revolt of the slaves (they despised them too deeply to fear them), but there existed between the whites and the free mulattoes alone hatred enough to overturn the existing order of things in the colony, whenever the fatal day should come for this long-suppressed volcano to explode. Early in that month of August, so ardently prayed for by myself, a strange incident occurred, which dashed an unexpected anxiety into the midst of my tranquil hopes.

CHAPTER VI.

"My uncle had constructed, upon the banks of a beautiful river which watered his plantation, a small pavilion of boughs, surrounded by a dense copse, which Marie daily visited to inhale the refreshing sea-breezes which from morning till night, during the hotter months of the year, blow regularly upon San Domingo, and the force of which is increased or decreased in exact ratio to the heat of the day.

"I myself made it a point to embellish this retreat every morning with the rarest flowers I could procure.

"One day Marie came running to meet me, in terror. Entering her verdant cabinet as usual, she discovered, with mingled surprise and alarm, all the flowers with which I had that morning decked it torn in pieces and trodden under foot; a bouquet of freshly gathered marigolds had been laid upon her accustomed seat. She had not yet recovered from her fright, when she heard the sound of a guitar issuing from the very midst of the copse

surrounding the pavilion; then a voice, which was not mine, began tenderly to sing a song, that appeared to her Spanish, but of which her perturbation, and doubtless her maiden modesty also, had prevented her from distinguishing anything more than her own name, frequently repeated. Then she had betaken herself to headlong flight, fortunately finding no obstacle in her way. This recital filled me with transports of indignation and jealousy. My first suspicions fastened upon the sang-mêlé, with whom I had recently had an altercation, but in my perplexity I resolved to do nothing rashly. I reassured poor Marie, and I promised to watch over her incessantly until the day, soon to come, when I should be permitted to take her into still closer protection.

"Rightly conjecturing that the audacious intruder, whose insolence had given Marie such fright, would not content himself with a first attempt to disclose what I divined to be his passion for her, I placed myself in ambush that very evening, after all on the plantation were asleep, at the base of the building in which lay my betrothed. Concealed in the thicket of tall sugar-cane, I waited. I did not wait in vain. Toward midnight, a grave, melancholy prelude, rising in the silence a few steps from me, suddenly awakened my attention. The

sound struck me like a blow; it was a guitar; it was just under Marie's window. Brandishing my poniard in a delirium of rage, I sprang toward the spot from which the sounds came, crushing under my feet the brittle stalks of the sugar-cane. Suddenly I felt that I was seized and thrown down by a power which seemed to me superhuman; my poniard was wrenched from my grasp and I saw it flash above my head. At the same time two glaring eyes gleamed in the darkness close above my own, and from a double row of white teeth, of which I caught a glimpse in the gloom, escaped these words, pronounced in the smothered accent of rage, '*Te tengo, te tengo.*'[1]

"Astounded rather than terrified, I struggled, but in vain, with my formidable adversary, and already the point of the steel had pierced my clothing, when Marie, awakened by the guitar and the noise of steps and voices, suddenly presented herself at the window. She recognized my voice, saw the glistening of the poniard, and uttered a shriek of anguish and terror.

"That rending cry paralyzed the arm of my victorious antagonist; he paused as if petrified by an enchantment; for an instant in his indecision he held the poniard at my breast, then suddenly fling-

[1] I've got you, I've got you.

ing it down, he exclaimed in French: *'Non! non! elle pleurerait trop!'*[1]

"As he finished these mysterious words he disappeared in the cane-thicket, and before I had risen from the ground, bruised in this strange and unequal struggle, not a sound, not a vestige remained of his presence or departure.

"It would be difficult for me to tell what passed through my mind when I recovered from my first astonishment in the arms of my lovely Marie, to whom I had been so strangely preserved by him even who seemed to be disputing her affections with me. I was more indignant than ever at the appearance of an unexpected rival, and chagrined at being indebted to him for life. After all, argued my pride, it is to Marie I owe it, for it was the power of her voice that flung down the poniard? I could not deny, however, that there was something magnanimous in the feeling which had prompted my unknown rival to spare me. But who was this rival? I puzzled myself with suspicions, each of which destroyed the others. It could not be the sang-mêlé planter, whom my jealousy had at first accused. He was far from possessing that extraordinary physical strength, and, moreover, it was not his voice. The person with whom I had wres-

[1] No, no; she would weep too much.

tled seemed to be naked to the waist. None but slaves in the colonies are thus habited. But this could not be a slave; sentiments, such as had influenced him to cast away the poniard, could not by any possibility belong to a slave; and besides, my whole soul revolted from the supposition that I had a rival in a slave. Who was he, then? I resolved to wait and watch.

CHAPTER VII.

"Marie had awakened the old nurse, who was to her the mother she had lost while yet in the cradle. I passed the remainder of the night by her, and as soon as the day broke we informed my uncle of these inexplicable occurrences. His surprise was extreme; but his pride, like my own, would not allow him to entertain the idea that the unknown lover of his daughter could be a slave. The nurse received orders not to leave Marie for a moment; and as the sessions of the Provincial Assembly, the cares which the increasingly menacing attitude of colonial affairs gave to the principal colonists, and the working of his plantations, left my uncle no leisure, he authorized me to attend his daughter upon all her walks until the day of our marriage, which was fixed for the twenty-second of August. At the same time, presuming that the new lover could only have come from beyond his domains, he ordered the inclosures henceforth to be watched night and day more strictly than ever.

"Having taken these precautions in concert

with my uncle, I was eager to put them to the proof. I went to the pavilion on the river side, and repairing the disorder of the preceding evening, I decked it again with flowers, as I had been accustomed to embellish it for Marie.

"When the hour arrived at which she went there, I armed myself with my carbine, loaded with ball, and proposed to my cousin to go with her to the pavilion. The old nurse followed.

"Marie, to whom I had not mentioned that I had removed the traces which had frightened her on the previous evening, first entered the leafy cabinet.

"'See, Leopold,' said she, 'my arbor is in the same disorder as when I left it yesterday; your labor has been wasted, your flowers are torn and withered. What astonishes me most,' added she, picking up a bouquet of wild marigolds which had been laid upon the turf seat, 'what astonishes me most is that this vile bouquet has lost none of its freshness since yesterday. Look, my dear Leopold, it has the appearance of being but just gathered.'

"I was petrified with astonishment and rage. In fact, my morning's labor was already destroyed, and these sad flowers, the freshness of which astonished my poor Marie, had insolently assumed the places of the roses I had strewn there.

"'Be calm,' said Marie, who observed my agitation, 'be calm; it is a thing of the past; this intruder will certainly never return; let us put it all under our feet, like this odious bouquet.'

"I took good care not to undeceive her, for fear of alarming her; and, without telling her that he who, she thought, *would never return* had already returned, I suffered her to gratify her innocent indignation and trample the marigolds under her feet. Then, trusting that the time had come for the discovery of my mysterious rival, I seated Marie in silence between her nurse and myself.

"Scarcely had we taken our seats, when Marie placed her finger upon my lips; sounds, weakened by the wind and the rippling of the water, reached her ear. I listened; it was the same sad, slow prelude which on the preceding night had roused my fury. I would have started from my seat; a gesture from Marie held me back.

"'Leopold,' said she, in a whisper, 'restrain yourself; perhaps he is about to sing, and no doubt his words will discover who he is.'

"In fact, a voice, the harmony of which was at once masculine and plaintive, rose a moment afterward from the depths of the wood, and blended with the grave notes of the guitar a Spanish ballad, every syllable of which resounded so distinctly in

my ear, that to this day my memory retains almost every expression:

"'Wherefore dost thou fly from me, Maria?[1] Wherefore dost thou fly from me, O maiden? Why that terror when thou hearest me? I am indeed formidable! I know to love, to suffer, and to sing!

"'When, through the outspringing branches of the cocoa trees upon the river side, I see thy light, pure form gliding; my vision is dazzled, O Maria! And I seem to see a spirit pass by!

"'And when I hear, O Maria! the enchanting accents which escape like a melody from thy lips, I seem to hear my throbbing heart, mingling its plaintive murmur with thy harmonious voice.

"'Alas, thy voice to me is sweeter than the song of those young birds which spread their wings in the heavens, and which come from my native land;

"'From my native land, where I reigned a king; from my native land, where I was free.

"'Free and a king, O maiden! I will forget all for thee; I will forget all: kingdom, family, duty, vengeance; yes, even vengeance, though the time is soon coming for gathering this bitter yet delicious fruit, so late in ripening!'

"The voice had sung the preceding stanzas with frequent and melancholy pauses, but as it finished these last lines it had assumed a terrible accent.

"'O Maria! thou art like a noble palm, slender and gently balanced upon its trunk, and in the eye of thy young adorer thou art reflected like the palm in the transparent waters of the fountain.

"'But knowest thou not, that sometimes there dwells in

[1] It was judged useless to reproduce here at length the words of the Spanish song, "*Porque me huyes, Maria?*" etc.

the depths of the desert a hurricane, jealous of the happiness of the beloved fountain? It rushes forth; the air and the sand are mingled together under the flapping of its heavy pinions; it wraps the tree and the spring in a fiery whirlwind; and the fountain is dried up, and the palm-tree feels the green circle of its leaves, majestic as a crown and graceful as silken locks, withering under the death-blast.

"'Tremble, O white daughter of Hispaniola![1] Tremble, lest all around thee soon become a hurricane and a desert! Then wilt thou regret the love which might have conducted thee to me, as the joyous katha, the bird of safety, guides the traveler to the fountain across the sands of Africa.'

"'And wherefore wouldst thou repulse my love, Maria? I am a king, and my brow rises above all that are human. Thou art white, and I am black: but day must be wedded to night to give birth to the aurora and the sunset, which are more beautiful than either.'"

[1] Our readers are doubtless aware that this was the first name given to San Domingo, by Christopher Columbus, at the time of its discovery, in December, 1492.

CHAPTER VIII.

"A DEEP sigh, prolonged upon the trembling chords of the guitar, accompanied these last words. I was boiling with rage. 'A king!—black!—a slave!' A multitude of incoherent ideas, awakened by the mysterious song which I had just heard, whirled through my brain. A violent desire to have done with this unknown being, who thus dared to associate the name of Marie with songs of love and defiance, took possession of my soul. I seized my carbine convulsively, and rushed headlong from the pavilion. Marie, in terror, extended her arms to keep me back, but I had already plunged into the thicket on that side whence the voice had proceeded. I searched the copse on every side; I plunged the muzzle of my carbine into the bushes, hunted about all the large trees, stirred up all the taller plants.

"Nothing, nothing, nothing, continually. This fruitless search, together with fruitless reflections on the song I had just heard, added confusion to my anger. Would, then, this insolent rival always

elude my arm as well as my conjecture? Could I neither imagine him nor encounter him?

"At this moment the sound of bells roused me from my revery. I turned around. The dwarf Habibrah was at my side.

"'Good day, master,' said he, with a reverential bow, but his sinister glance, obliquely directed toward me, appeared to remark with an indefinable expression of malice and triumph the anxiety depicted on my brow.

"'Speak!' I exclaimed impatiently. 'Have you seen anybody in this wood?'

"'None but yourself, señor mio,' replied he calmly.

"'Have you heard no voice?'

"The slave paused a moment, as if thinking what he should reply. I was boiling with rage.

"'Quick,' said I, 'answer instantly, wretch! Have you heard a voice here?'

"Boldly fastening upon me the glance of his eyes, round as those of a wild-cat, he replied:

"'*Que quiere decir usted*[1] by a voice, master? There are voices everywhere and in everything. There are the voices of the birds; there is the voice of the waters; there is the voice of the wind in the leaves.'

[1] What do you mean?

"I interrupted him by a violent shaking.

"'Miserable buffoon! cease to make me your jest, or you shall hear the voice of a carbine. Answer me forthwith. Have you heard in this wood a man singing a Spanish air?'

"'Yes, señor,' replied he, unmoved, 'and some words of the air. Wait, master, and I will tell you all about it. I was walking along the borders of this thicket, listening to what the little silver bells of my *gorra*[1] were saying in my ear. All at once the wind added to this concert some words of a language you call Spanish, the first I ever lisped, when my age was counted by months instead of years, and when my mother suspended me on her back by strings of red and yellow wool. I love that language; it recalls to me the time when I was little, but not a dwarf: a child, but not a fool. I approached the voice and heard the conclusion of his song.'

"'Well, is that all?' demanded I, impatiently.

"'Yes, master *hermoso*, but if you wish I will tell you what the man is who was singing.'

"I was almost ready to embrace the poor buffoon.

"'Speak,' I cried, 'speak, Habibrah; here is my purse, and ten heavier purses are yours if you tell me who this man is.'

[1] By this term the Spanish griffe designates his fool's cap.

"He took the purse, opened it and smiled.

"'*Diez bolsas* heavier than this! But, *demonio!* that would make a full *fanega* of good crowns stamped with the image *del rey Luis quince*, as many as would be needed to sow the field of the magician of Grenada, Altornino, who knew the art of making them spring up *buenos doblones;* but don't be angry, young master, I am coming to the point.'

"'Recall, señor, the last words of the song: "Thou art white and I am black, but day must be wedded to night to give birth to the aurora and the sunset, which are more beautiful than either."'

"'Now if that song tells the truth, the griffe Habibrah, your humble slave, sprung from the union of a negress and a white, is more beautiful than yourself, señorito de amor. I am the offspring of the day wedded to the night; I am the aurora and the sunset, of which the Spanish song speaks, and you are only the day. Then I am more beautiful than yourself, *si usted quiere*,[1] more beautiful than a white.'

"The dwarf interspersed this strange exposition with loud bursts of laughter. I interrupted him again.

"What are you coming at by these extrava-

[1] If you please.

His yawning and hideous jaws were stretched out toward a young black—Page 49.

ganzas? Will all that tell me what the man is who was singing in the wood?

"'Precisely, master,' replied the buffoon with a malicious smile. 'It is plain that *el hombre* who could sing such *extravaganzas*, as you call them, can be and is none but a fool like me! I have earned *las diez bolsas*.'

"I had raised my hand to chastise the insolent pleasantry of the emancipated slave, when suddenly I heard a fearful shriek from the thicket surrounding the pavilion by the river. It was Marie's voice.

"I leaped, I ran, I flew, asking myself in terror what new misfortune I could have to fear. Breathless I reached the verdant cabinet. A hideous sight awaited me.

"A monstrous crocodile, whose body was half hidden under the reeds and mangroves of the river bank, had pushed his enormous head through one of the green arches which sustained the roof of the pavilion. His yawning and hideous jaws were stretched out toward a young black of colossal stature, who with one arm supported the terrified girl, while with the other he was boldly plunging a two-edged axe between the serrated jaws of the monster. The crocodile struggled furiously against the bold and powerful hand which held him at bay.

At the moment I appeared at the entrance of the arbor, Marie uttered a cry of joy, tore herself from the arms of the negro and cast herself into mine, exclaiming, 'I am saved!'

"At this movement, at these words of Marie, the negro hastily turned, crossed his arms on his heaving breast, and casting a melancholy glance upon my betrothed, stood immovable, seeming not to perceive that the crocodile was upon him, that it had freed itself from the axe and was on the point of seizing him. All would have been over with the courageous black, if, placing Marie upon the lap of her nurse, who, more dead than alive, had remained all the while seated upon a bench, I had not advanced to the monster and fired my carbine directly into his mouth.

"The thunderstricken animal twice or thrice opened his bleeding jaws and swimming eyes, and then shut them again; but it was only a convulsive effort, and suddenly he turned with a loud crash upon his back, and his two broad scaly paws stiffened. He was dead.

"The negro whose life I had so fortunately saved, turned his head and watched the last quiverings of the monster; then he fixed his eyes upon the ground and, raising them slowly toward Marie, who, leaning upon my breast, had completely recov-

ered, he said to me, and the tone of his voice expressed even more than despair:

"'*Porque le has matado?*'[1]

"Then he strode away, without awaiting my answer, into the thicket and was lost to view.

[1] Why did you kill him?

CHAPTER IX.

"This terrible scene, this singular denouement, the various emotions which had preceded, accompanied and followed my futile search in the wood, produced a chaos in my brain. Marie was still absorbed in her fright, and some time elapsed before we could communicate our incoherent thoughts, otherwise than by glances and pressures of the hand. At length I broke the silence.

"'Come, Marie, let us go! Some ill omen hangs over this place!'

"She rose eagerly, as if she had only been awaiting my permission, placed her arm in mine, and we walked away.

"Then I asked her how it happened that at the very moment of her fearful peril, she had received the miraculous assistance of this black, and if she knew who owned the slave; for the coarse drawers which scarcely covered his nakedness, plainly discovered that he belonged to the lowest class of the inhabitants of the island.

"'This man,' said Marie, 'is doubtless one of

my father's negroes, who must have been at work near the river, when the sudden appearance of the crocodile caused me to utter the shriek which warned you of my danger. All I can tell you is, that that very instant he rushed from the wood, and came to my relief.'

"'From which quarter did he come?' I asked.

"'From the side opposite to that whence the singing proceeded the moment before, and where you had just entered the thicket.'

"This circumstance disturbed the comparison which I had involuntarily made between the Spanish words addressed to me by the negro on retiring, and the romance which my unknown rival had sung in the same language.

"Additional probabilities, however, had already presented themselves to my imagination. This negro, of stature almost gigantic, and of prodigious strength, was probably the rude antagonist whom I had encountered on the previous night. The circumstance of his nudity was another remarkable indication. The singer in the grove had said, 'I am black—' Another coincidence. He had declared himself a king, and yet this man was but a slave; but not without astonishment did I recall the air of boldness and of majesty stamped upon his countenance, amid all the characteristics

of the African race—the lustre of his eye, the whiteness of his teeth contrasting with the blackness of his skin, the breadth of his brow, surprising in a negro, the scornful inflation which imparted to his lips and nostrils so proud and commanding an expression, his noble mien, the beauty of his form, which, though rendered meagre and somewhat repulsive by the toils of daily labor, still possessed a Herculean development. I represented to myself the imposing appearance of this slave, and I thought that it might well befit a king.

"Then, calling up a host of other incidents, my suspicions would fall with a thrill of rage upon this insolent negro; I longed to find and punish him. Again all my hesitation would return.

"In reality, what was the foundation of all my suspicions? A large part of the island of San Domingo was in the possession of Spain, from which it resulted that many negroes, either belonging originally to the colonists of San Domingo, or born there, introduced the Spanish language into their own jargon. And because this slave had addressed me a few words in Spanish, was it a sufficient reason for supposing him the author of a ballad in that language, a fact which necessarily implied a degree of mental culture impossible, in my estimation, for a slave?

"As to this mysterious reproach, which he directed to me for killing the crocodile, it discovered in the slave a disgust of life, which might be explained by his condition as a slave, without having recourse to the hypothesis of an impossible affection for his master's daughter.

"His presence in the thicket around the arbor was perhaps merely fortuitous; his strength and stature were insufficient proofs of his identity with my nocturnal antagonist. Upon so slight suspicions could I make so terrible an accusation against him before my uncle, and deliver over to the implacable vengeance of his pride a poor slave, who had displayed such fortitude in succoring Marie?

"Just as these reflections had softened my anger, Marie entirely dissipated it by saying in her sweet voice—

"'My dear Leopold, we should be grateful to this brave negro; but for him I had perished! You would have come too late.'

"Those few words were decisive. It did not change my intention of seeking out the slave who had saved Marie, but it also changed the object of that search. It had been for punishment; it now was for reward.

"My uncle having learned from me that he owed

his daughter's life to one of his slaves, promised me his liberty, if I could discover him among the multitude of those poor unfortunates.

CHAPTER X.

"HITHERTO my natural disposition had inclined me to keep aloof from the plantations where the blacks labored. It was too painful for me to behold the sufferings of beings whom I could not relieve. But when upon the following day my uncle proposed to have my company in his tour of inspection, I accepted the proposal with eagerness, hoping to discover among the laborers the savior of my darling Marie.

"In this survey I had an opportunity of witnessing the power which the master's glance possesses over his slaves; but at the same time, how dearly this power is bought! The negroes, trembling in the presence of my uncle, redoubled their efforts and their activity; and yet how much hate there was in this terror.

"Irrascible by habit, my uncle was ready to fall into a passion, even at failing to meet with a subject for his anger, when his buffoon Habibrah, who always followed him, called his attention to a black, who, overcome with fatigue, lay asleep under a

thicket of date-trees. The affrighted negro sprang up, and as he rose, exposed to view a young Bengal rose-bush, upon which he had carelessly lain, and which was a favorite of my uncle. The shrub was ruined. The master, already irritated at what he considered the idleness of the slave, became furious at this sight. Beside himself with rage, he detached from his belt the whip, armed with pointed thongs, which he always carried with him upon his walks, and raised his arm to strike the negro who had fallen upon his knees.

"The whip did not fall. I shall never forget that moment. A powerful grasp suddenly arrested the hand of the colonist. A black (the very man whom I sought) exclaimed in French—

"'Strike me, for I have offended you, but strike not my brother, who has only touched your rose-bush.'

"This unexpected interposition of the man to whom I owed the safety of Marie, his gestures, his look, the imperious accents of his voice, struck me with astonishment. But his generous imprudence, far from covering my uncle with shame, only increased his rage, and turned it from the sufferer to his defender. Exasperated at this, my uncle disengaged his arm from the grasp of the athletic negro, loading him with threats, and again raised his whip

to strike him. This time the whip was wrested from his hand. The black broke the nail-studded handle as easily as if it were a straw, and trampled under his feet the shameful instrument of vengeance. I was motionless with surprise, my uncle with fury; never before had his authority thus been set at defiance. His eyes rolled as if ready to burst from their sockets; his blue lips trembled. For a moment the slave looked upon him calmly, then suddenly and with dignity presenting to him an axe that he held in his hand,

"'White,' said he, 'if you would strike me, at least take this weapon.'

"My uncle, who was beside himself, would certainly have granted his request, and was grasping the axe, when I in my turn interfered. Quickly seizing the weapon, I threw it into the well of a *noria*, which was at hand.

"'What are you doing?' exclaimed my uncle, angrily.

"'I am sparing you,' I replied, 'the misfortune of striking the preserver of your daughter. To this slave you owe the life of Marie; this is the negro whose liberty you have promised me.'

"The moment was ill-chosen to claim the promise. My words gained little hold upon the exasperated planter.

"'His liberty,' replied he, gloomily. 'Yes, he deserves to see the end of his slavery. His liberty! We shall see what sort of liberty the judges of the court-martial will award him!'

"The ill-omened words made my blood run cold. Marie and I supplicated in vain. The negro, whose negligence had given rise to this scene, was punished with the bastinado, and his defender was immured within the dungeons of Fort Galifet, for having lifted his hand against a white. This, from a slave to his master, was a capital crime.

CHAPTER XI.

"You can judge, gentlemen, to what a height my interest and curiosity must have been excited by all these circumstances. I made particular inquiries concerning the prisoner. I learned that his companions seemed to have the deepest respect for the young negro. A slave like themselves, a signal from his hand insured their instant obedience. He had not been born in the cabins; they knew neither his father nor his mother; it was reported that a few years previous to that time, he had been cast upon San Domingo by a slave-ship. This circumstance rendered still more remarkable the sway which he exercised over all his companions, not excepting even the creole blacks, who, you are doubtless aware, gentlemen, usually profess the most profound contempt for the *Congo* negroes—an improper and indefinite term, by which are designated in the colonies all slaves who have been brought from Africa.

"Though he seemed to be absorbed in the

deepest melancholy, his extraordinary strength, united to a wonderful skill, rendered him the most valuable slave upon the plantations. He could turn the wheel of the norias with greater rapidity and for a longer time than could be done by the best horse. He often performed the labor of ten of his companions in a day, to save them from the punishment allotted to negligence or fatigue. Thus he won the adoration of the slaves, but the veneration which they bore him, though entirely different from the superstitious terror with which they invested the jester Habibrah, seemed also to have some hidden cause; it was a sort of worship.

"The most singular thing, they said, was that he was as gentle and unassuming with his equals, who gloried in obeying him, as he was proud and haughty when confronted with the overseers. It is but just to remark, that the privileged slaves, these intermediate links which connect the chain of servitude to that of despotism, uniting with the baseness of their condition the insolence of authority, took a malignant pleasure in burdening him with labor and hardships. Nevertheless, it seemed that they could not withhold their respect for the proud sense of honor which had led him to affront my uncle. Not one of them had ever

ventured to inflict upon him humiliating punishment. If for any cause he happened to be condemned to it, twenty negroes would rise and offer to suffer in his stead, while without moving a muscle he would calmly witness the execution of the punishment, as if they were only discharging a duty. This singular man was known throughout the negro quarters by the name of Pierrot.

CHAPTER XII.

"ALL these things intensely excited my youthful imagination. Full of gratitude and compassion, Marie commended and shared my enthusiasm, and Pierrot acquired so strong a hold upon our interest, that I resolved to see him and to serve him. How should I find means to speak with him?

"Although still young, yet as nephew of one of the wealthiest colonists of Cape Haytien, I was captain of the militia of the parish of the Acul. Fort Galifet was guarded by them and by a detachment of yellow dragoons, whose chief, usually a sub-officer of this company, held the command of the Fort. Just at this period the commandant was brother of a poor colonist, to whom I had, fortunately, rendered some important services, and who was entirely devoted to me."

Here the whole party interrupted D'Auverney by the exclamation, "Thaddeus!"

"You have guessed it, gentlemen," resumed

the Captain. "You will readily understand that it was not difficult through his aid to obtain access to the negro's cell. As captain of the militia I had a right to visit the Fort. However, to avoid awakening the suspicions of my uncle, whose anger had by no means cooled, I was careful to repair thither at the hour in which he took his siesta; all the soldiers, excepting those on guard, were also asleep. Guided by Thaddeus I reached the door of the cell; Thaddeus opened it and withdrew. I entered.

'The black was seated; his extraordinary stature would not permit him to stand erect. He was not alone; an enormous dog moved growling towards me. 'Rask!' cried the black. The young dog was still, returned and crouched at his master's feet, where he continued to devour some wretched fragments.

"I was in uniform; the light given to the narrow dungeon by the loophole was so feeble that Pierrot could not distinguish who I was.

"'I am ready,' said he, in a calm tone. As he uttered these words, he half arose.

"'I am ready,' he repeated.

"'I thought,' said I, in surprise at the freedom of his movements, 'I thought you were in irons.'

"Emotion made my voice tremble. The prisoner did not appear to recognize me. He pushed with his foot something which made a metallic sound.

"'Irons? I have broken them.'

"There was something in the tone with which he uttered these last words which seemed to say, '*I was not made to bear chains.*'

"I resumed,

"'I was not told that your dog was left you.'

"'I let him in myself.'

"My astonishment continued to increase. The door of the cell was closed on the outside by a triple bolt. The loophole, scarcely six inches across, was secured by two iron bars. He seemed to have perceived the drift of my reflections, for rising as much as the low ceiling would permit, he detached without effort an enormous stone beneath the embrasure, and removed the bars that were fastened to the outer edge of this stone, and thus effected an opening through which two men could easily pass. This opening looked out upon the grove of cocoa and palm trees, which covered the hill on the side of which the fort was built. Surprise held me dumb; suddenly a beam of light

shone upon my face. The prisoner started up, as if by mistake he had trodden upon an adder, and his forehead struck against the stone ceiling. An undefinable commingling of a multitude of conflicting sentiments, a strange expression of hatred, kindness, and sorrowful astonishment, passed into his eyes. Then suddenly resuming sway over his thoughts, his features in an instant again became calm and cold, and he fastened his gaze with indifference upon mine. He stared me in the face, as if he knew me not.

"'I can live two days longer without eating,' said he.

"I started with horror. I then noticed the starved appearance of the unhappy captive. He continued:

"'My dog can eat only from my hand; if I had not enlarged the loophole poor Rask must have starved. It is better that it should be me than he, since I must die anyway.'

"'No,' I exclaimed; 'No; you shall not die of starvation.'

"He did not understand me.

"'Doubtless,' he continued, with a bitter smile, 'I could have lived two days longer without eating; but I am ready, Mr. Officer; to-day is still better than to-morrow. Do not harm Rask.'

"I now understood what he meant by saying, '*I am ready.*' Charged with a crime punishable with death, he thought I had come to conduct him to execution; and yet this man, endowed with such colossal strength, and with the means of flight open before him, calmly and gently repeated to a comparative child, '*I am ready.*'

"'Do not harm Rask,' he said once more.

"I could contain myself no longer.

"'What!' said I, 'You take me, then, for your executioner, and even doubt my humanity toward this poor dog, who has done nothing to me.'

"He began to relent; his tone changed.

"'White,' said he, extending his hand, 'pardon me. I love my dog; and,' added he, after a moment of silence, 'your race has done me much harm.'

"I clasped him, I pressed his hand, I undeceived him.

"'Do you not recognize me,' said I.

"'I knew that you were a white, and in the eyes of the whites, however kind they may be, a black is of small consequence. Besides, I have reason to complain of you.'

"'For what!' I exclaimed in astonishment.

"'Have you not twice preserved my life?'

"This singular accusation excited a smile; he perceived it, and continued bitterly:

"'Yes, I have a right to complain. You have saved me from a crocodile and from a colonist; and still worse, you have taken away my right to hate you. I am indeed miserable!'

"The singularity of his language and ideas no longer surprised me; they were in harmony with himself.

"'My indebtedness to you is still greater than yours to me,' I replied. 'To you I owe the life of my betrothed Marie.'

"He started as with an electric shock. '*Maria*!' he ejaculated in a stifled voice; and his head fell upon his hands, which clutched violently, while the great walls of his chest rose and fell with heavy sighs.

"I acknowledge that my suppressed suspicions were awakened, but they were revived without anger or jealousy. I was too near happiness, and he too near death, for such a rival, if indeed he were one, to excite in me any other sentiments than those of benevolence and pity.

"At length he raised his head. 'Go,' said he; 'do not thank me.'

"After a pause he added, 'Yet my rank is not inferior to yours!'

"These last words seemed to disclose an order of ideas which intensely piqued my curiosity; I

urged him to tell me who he was, and what he had suffered. He maintained a gloomy silence. My manner had touched his heart ; my offers of assistance and my entreaties appeared to overcome his disgust of life. He went out and brought in some bananas and a large cocoa-nut. Then he closed the opening and began to eat. As our conversation continued, I observed that he spoke both French and Spanish with facility, and that his mind did not seem devoid of culture ; he knew many Spanish songs, which he sang with feeling. This man had been so unaccountable in so many other points of view, that hitherto the purity of his language had escaped my notice. I made a fresh attempt to discover the cause of it ; he was silent. At last I left him, charging my faithful Thaddeus to treat him with all possible care and attention.

CHAPTER XIII.

"I saw him every day at the same hour. His position gave me much uneasiness; in spite of my entreaties, my uncle was obstinately bent upon prosecuting him. I did not conceal my fears from Pierrot; he listened with indifference.

"Oftentimes when we were together Rask came in bringing around his neck a large palm-leaf. The black took off the leaf, read some unknown characters traced upon it and then tore it in pieces. I had become accustomed to ask him no questions.

"One day I entered without his appearing to notice me. His back was turned to the door of the cell, and he was singing in a melancholy tone the Spanish air: '*Yo que soy contrabandista.*'[1] As he finished the song, turning hastily around, he exclaimed:

"'Brother, promise, if you ever distrust me, to banish all suspicions when you hear me singing this song.'

[1] I who am a contrabandist.

"His manner was impressive; I promised as he desired, without really understanding what he meant by the words, '*if you ever distrust me.*' He took the hollow shell of the nut, gathered on the day of my first visit, and which he had preserved, filled it with palm-juice, touched it to my lips, then quaffed it at a draught. From that day forward he always called me *brother.*

"Meanwhile I began to cherish a hope of his deliverance. My uncle's first irritation had passed away. The festivities of my approaching marriage with his daughter had occupied his mind with gentler thoughts. Marie united her supplications to mine. I represented to him that Pierrot had not intended to offend him, but only to prevent him from committing an act of severity which was perhaps excessive; that by his daring struggle with the crocodile he had rescued Marie from certain death; that to him we were both indebted, he for his daughter, and I for my bride. I urged, moreover, that Pierrot was the most vigorous among his slaves (for I no longer hoped to obtain his freedom, and would be content with securing his life); that he could perform the labor of ten negroes; that his single arm was sufficient to set in motion the cylinders of a sugar-mill. He listened to my rhapsody and

importunity, and intimated that perhaps he would not follow up the accusation. I said nothing to the black of this change in my uncle, wishing to enjoy the pleasure of announcing to him his full freedom, if I could obtain it. What astonished me was that, while he believed he was doomed to death, he made use of none of the means of flight which were in his power. I spoke of it to him. 'I must stay,' he replied, coldly, 'lest they think I am afraid.'

CHAPTER XIV.

"One morning Marie came to me. She was radiant, and there was in her sweet face something even more angelic than the joy of pure love. It was the consciousness of a good action.

"'Listen,' said she; 'in three days it will be the twenty-second of August, and our wedding-day. We shall soon—'

"I interrupted her. 'Marie, do not say soon, for it is three days longer — three days!' She smiled and blushed.

"'Do not interrupt me, Leopold,' she continued; 'an idea has occurred to me which will gratify you. You know that I went to town yesterday to purchase my wedding ornaments — not that I value these gems, these diamonds, for they make me no more beautiful in your eyes. I would give all the pearls in the world for one of those flowers destroyed by that wretched man who left the bunch of marigolds; but let that pass. It is my father's pleasure to load me with all that sort of thing, and to gratify him I shall

desire to possess them. Yesterday there was a basquina of Chinese satin, with large flowers, put up in a box of sandal-wood, which I looked at much. It is very dear, but it is very rare. My father noticed that this robe attracted my attention. On our return I begged him to promise me a gift, after the manner of the old chevaliers; you know he likes to be compared to an old chevalier. He swore, upon his honor, he would grant the present I demanded, whatever it might be. He thinks it is the Chinese satin basquina; not at all; it is Pierrot's life. That shall be my wedding gift.'

"I could not refrain from clasping such an angel in my arms. My uncle's word was sacred; and, while Marie proceeded to claim from him its fulfillment, I hurried to Fort Galifet, to announce to Pierrot that his safety was henceforth certain.

"'Brother!' I cried on entering, 'brother! rejoice! your life is saved. Marie has asked it of her father for her wedding gift!'

"'The slave shuddered. 'Marie! wedding! my life! How can all these go together?'

"'Very readily,' I answered. 'Marie, whose life you saved, is to be married—'

"'To whom?' shouted the slave, and his eyes grew wild and terrific.

"'Do you not know?' I answered, gently; 'to me.'

"His fearful expression became gentle and resigned again.

"'Ah! it is true,' said he, 'it is to you. And what is the appointed day?'

"'The twenty-second of August.'

"'The twenty-second of August! Are you mad?' he exclaimed, with an expression of anguish and terror.

"He paused. I looked upon him in astonishment. After a short silence, he clasped my hand warmly. 'Brother, I owe you so much that I must give you warning. Believe me, return to the Cape, be married before the twenty-second of August.'

"I endeavored in vain to learn the meaning of these enigmatic words.

"'Adieu!' said he, with singular solemnity. 'I have, perhaps, already said too much; but I hate ingratitude still more than perjury.'

"I left him, filled with hesitation and apprehensions, which, however, my thoughts of happiness soon dispelled.

"My uncle withdrew his complaint that very day. I returned to the Fort, to liberate Pierrot. Thaddeus, knowing him to be free, entered the

prison with me. He was there no longer. Rask, who was there alone, came fawning upon me; to his neck was attached a palm-leaf; I took it, and read these words:

"'*Thanks! you have saved my life a third time. Brother, forget not your promise.*' Underneath was written, as if for a signature, the words: '*Yo que soy contrabandista.*'

"The astonishment of Thaddeus was still greater than mine; ignorant of the secret of the loophole, he imagined that the negro had metamorphosed himself into his dog. I did not disturb him in his belief, contenting myself with exacting from him silence upon all he had seen.

"I took away Rask; as we issued from the Fort, he dashed into the neighboring hedges and disappeared.

CHAPTER XV.

"My uncle was exasperated at the escape of the slave. He ordered search to be made, and wrote to the governor, placing Pierrot entirely in his power if he should be retaken.

"The twenty-second of August came. My union with Marie was celebrated with magnificent pomp in the parish of the Acul. How happy was this day, from which all my misfortunes were to date! I was intoxicated with a joy which those only who have experienced it can understand. Pierrot and his ill-omened warnings were entirely forgotten. Night, so impatiently awaited, came at last. My young bride withdrew to the nuptial chamber, whither I could not follow as speedily as I would have wished. A tedious but indispensable duty first claimed my attention. My office of captain of the militia compelled me this night to go on duty at the post of the Acul; this precaution was then imperatively demanded by the troubled state of the colony; by the partial revolts of the blacks,

which, though promptly suppressed, had taken place in the preceding months of June and July, and even in the first days of August, in the Thibaud and Lagoscette plantations; and above all by the turbulent disposition of the free mulattoes, the irritation of whose feelings the recent execution of the rebel Ogé had served only to increase. My uncle was the first to call me to my official duties; I resigned myself without a murmur. I put on my uniform, and set forth. I visited the first stations without finding any cause for alarm; but about midnight, as I was walking in a musing mood near the batteries on the bay, I perceived in the horizon a reddish light rise and extend itself, in the direction of Limonade and Saint Louis du Morin. Both the soldiers and myself at first attributed it to some accidental fire, but a moment after the flames became so distinct, and the smoke, uplifted by the wind, increased and thickened to such a degree, that I promptly retraced my steps to the Fort, to give the alarm and send assistance.

"Passing by the cabins of our negroes, I was surprised at the extraordinary agitation which prevailed. Most of them were still awake, and were talking with the greatest vivacity. An

odd name, *Bug-Jargal*, pronounced with much respect, was frequently heard in the midst of their unintelligible jargon. However, I caught a few words, from which I gathered that the blacks on the northern plain were in open revolt, and were setting on fire the dwellings and plantations situated on the other side of the Cape. As I passed through a marshy piece of ground my foot stumbled against a heap of hatchets and pickaxes, hidden among the canes and rushes. Justly alarmed, I immediately put the militia of the Acul under arms, ordering them to keep strict watch upon the slaves; all became calm again.

"Meanwhile the flames seemed every moment to increase in the direction of the Limbé. We could even distinguish the distant noise of artillery and musketry. About two in the morning my uncle, whom I had awakened, unable longer to conceal his alarm, ordered me to leave in the Acul a part of the militia, under the command of the lieutenant, and while my poor Marie was still asleep or awaiting my coming, I obeyed my uncle—who, as I have said, was a member of the provincial assembly—and with the remainder of the soldiers took up my march for the Cape.

"I shall never forget the aspect of the city as I approached it. The flames which were devouring the adjacent plantations spread over it a sombre light obscured by the torrents of smoke which the wind swept through the streets. Whirlwinds of sparks and cinders, formed by the burning fragments of the sugar-cane and driven with violence like a deluging snow upon the roofs of the dwellings and the rigging of the vessels moored in the roadstead, threatened the town every instant with a conflagration no less deplorable than that to which its environs were a prey.

"It was a hideous and imposing spectacle to behold, on one hand, the pallid inhabitants exposing their lives to dispute with this terrible scourge possession of the dwellings which alone remained of their immense wealth; while on the other, the shipping, dreading a similar fate, and favored by the wind which was so fatal to the unhappy colonists, were escaping under full sail over billows red with the bloody fires of the conflagration.

CHAPTER XVI.

"DEAFENED by the cannon from the forts, the outcries of the fugitives, and the distant crash of falling buildings, I knew not which way to direct my soldiers, when I encountered upon the parade-ground the captain of the Yellow Dragoons, who served us as guide. I will not pause, gentlemen, to describe the picture spread out before us upon the burning plain. Others have depicted these first disasters of the Cape and I would pass rapidly over these recollections of blood and fire. I will restrict myself to saying that the rebellious slaves were, it was said, already masters of the Dondon, of the Terrier-Rouge, of the borough of Ouanaminte, and even of the unfortunate plantations of the Limbé; and the latter circumstance filled me with fearful apprehension, on account of its vicinity to the Acul.

"I presented myself in haste at the palace of the governor, M. de Blanchelande. All was confusion, in which the governor shared. I asked

him to give me orders, begging him to attend as quickly as possible to the safety of the Acul, since it was already threatened with destruction. He had with him M. de Rouvray, field-marshal, and one of the principal landed proprietors of the island; M. de Thouzard, lieutenant-colonel of the Cape regiment; some members of the Colonial and Provincial Assemblies, and many of the principal colonists. At the moment of my appearance this council was in the midst of a tumultuous deliberation.

"'Governor,' said a member of the Provincial Assembly, 'it is but too true; it is the slaves, and not the free sang-mêlés; we have long foreseen and predicted it.'

"'You affirmed what you did not believe,' angrily rejoined a member of the Colonial Assembly, called the General Assembly. 'You said it to gain credit at our expense, and you were so far from expecting a real insurrection of the slaves, that it was the intrigues of your Assembly which in 1789 got up that ridiculous hoax of a revolt of three thousand blacks upon the hill of the Cape; a revolt in which only one national volunteer was killed, and he by his own comrades!'

"'I repeat it,' resumed the Provincial, 'we saw

more clearly than you. That is plain enough. We remained here watching colonial affairs, while your assembly went off in a body to France, to get up a decree for that ludicrous ovation, which was finally wound up by the reprimands of the National Representation. *Ridiculus mus!*'

"The member of the Colonial Assembly responded with bitter disdain:

"'Our fellow-citizens reëlected us unanimously!'

"'It was you,' replied the other, 'it was your exaggerations which took off the head of that unfortunate man, who showed himself in a coffee-house without the tri-colored cockade; and which hung the mulatto Lacombe for a petition commencing with these *obsolete* words: "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost!"'

"'That is false!' cried the member of the General Assembly. 'It is the struggle of principles with privileges—of the *crooked* against the *hooked!*'

"'I have always thought so, sir; you are an *independent!*'

"To this reproach from the member of the Provincial Assembly, his adversary replied with a triumphant air: 'You confess yourself, then,

to be a *pompon blanc*. I leave you under the weight of such an avowal.'

"The quarrel would probably have proceeded further, had not the governor interfered.

"'What, gentlemen, has this to do with the imminent danger which threatens us? Advise me, and do not bandy words. Listen to the reports which have reached me. The revolt commenced at ten o'clock last night, among the negroes of the Turpin plantation. The slaves, commanded by an English negro named Bouckmann, have dragged away the occupants of the Clément, Trémès, Flaville, and Noë plantations. They have fired all the plantations and massacred the colonists with unheard of barbarity. A single circumstance will reveal to you all its horror. Their standard is the body of a child borne upon the end of a pike.'

"M. de Blanchelande was interrupted by a shudder.

"'This is what is passing without,' he continued. 'Within, all is disorder. Many of the inhabitants of the Cape have killed their slaves; fear renders them cruel. The more moderate or brave limit themselves to shutting up under lock and key. The poor whites charge these disasters upon the free sang-mêlés. Many mu-

lattoes have nearly fallen victims to the popular fury. I have given them an asylum in a church, guarded by a battalion. And to prove that they are not in conspiracy with the revolted blacks, the sang-mêlés ask of me arms and a post to defend.'

"'Do nothing of the kind!' exclaimed a voice, which I recognized; it was that of the planter suspected of being a sang-mêlé, with whom I had fought the duel. 'Do nothing of the kind, Governor; give no arms to mulattoes.'

"'You do not wish to fight, then?' said a colonist, haughtily.

"The other appeared not to understand, and continued: 'The sang-mêlés are our worst enemies. They alone are to be feared. I confess that we might expect a revolt on their part, but not on that of the slaves. Do the slaves amount to anything?'

"The poor man hoped by these invectives against the mulattoes, to separate himself entirely from them, and to destroy in the minds of the whites who heard him, the general opinion that he belonged to that despised caste. There was too much cowardice in the attempt for it to be successful. A murmur of disapprobation apprised him of this.

"'Yes, sir,' said old Field-Marshal de Rouvray, 'yes, the slaves do amount to something; they are forty to three; and we should be in a sorry case if we could oppose to the negroes and mulattoes only such whites as youself."

"The colonist bit his lips.

"General,' resumed the governor, 'what think you, then, of the petition of the mulattoes?'

"'Give them arms, Governor!' replied M. de Rouvray; 'make use of anything!' and turning toward the suspected colonist: 'Do you hear, sir? go arm yourself.'

"The humiliated colonist left the assembly with all the marks of concentrated rage.

"Meanwhile the cry of distress which burst forth throughout the town extended from time to time even to the residence of the governor, and recalled to the members of this conference the subject they had assembled to consider.

"M. De Blanchelande hastily transmitted an order in pencil to an aide-de-camp, and broke the gloomy silence with which the assembly were listening to these alarming rumors.

"'The sang-mêlés shall be armed, gentlemen, but there are many other measures to be taken.'

"'The Provincial Assembly must be convoked,'

said the member of that Assembly, who had spoken at the moment of my entrance.

"'The Provincial Assembly!' repeated his antagonist of the Colonial Assembly. 'What is the Provincial Assembly?'

"'Because you are a member of the Colonial Assembly!' replied the Pompon blanc—

"The Independent interrupted him:

"'I no longer know either the Colonial or the Provincial. There is but one Assembly—the General. Do you understand, sir?'

"'Very well,' retorted the Pompon blanc, 'I tell you there is only the National Assembly of Paris.'

"'Convoke the Provincial Assembly!' repeated the Independent, laughing, 'as if it were not dissolved the moment the General Assembly decided on holding its sessions here.'

"A universal exclamation burst forth from the auditory, disgusted with this idle discussion.

"'Messieurs Deputies,' cried a contractor, 'while you amuse yourselves with this foolery, what is to become of my cotton and my cochineal.'

"'And my four hundred thousand indigo plants at the Limbé!' added a planter.

"'And my negroes, for which I paid an average of thirty dollars a head!' said the captain of a slave ship.

"'Every moment that you lose,' continued another colonist, 'costs me, sample and price list in hand, ten quintals of sugar, which at seventeen heavy piastres the quintal, is one hundred and thirty livres ten sous, French currency.'

"'The Colonial, or what you call the General Assembly, is a usurper!' again began the other disputant, overcoming the tumult by strength of lungs. 'Let it remain at Port-au-Prince manufacturing decrees for two leagues of territory, and two days of duration, but let it leave us here in peace. The Cape belongs to the Provincial Congress of the north, and to it alone!'

"'I contend,' urged the Independent, 'that his excellency the Governor has no right to convoke any other than the General Assembly of the representatives of the colony, presided over by M. de Cadusch!'

"'But where is your President, M. de Cadusch?' asked the Pompon blanc, 'where is your assembly? There are not yet four members here, while the Provincial Assembly is all present. Perhaps you desire to represent in your own person a whole assembly, a whole colony?'

"This rivalry of the two deputies, faithful echoes of their respective assemblies, again called for the interference of the Governor.

"'Gentlemen, will you never end with your eternal assemblies, Provincial, General, Colonial and National? are you aiding the decisions of this assembly by invoking three or four others?'

"'Morbleu!' cried General de Rouvray, in a voice of thunder, bringing his fist violently down upon the council-table; 'what cursed babblers! I would rather bawl against a twenty-four pounder. What are these two assemblies doing for us, who dispute precedence like two companies of grenadiers on mounting to the assault? Very well! Convoke both of them, governor; I will make two regiments of them, and march them against the blacks, and we will see if their muskets will make as much noise as their tongues.

"After this vigorous sally, he leaned toward his neighbor (it was myself) and said in a low voice: 'What can you expect from a governor on the part of the king of France, between two assemblies, each pretending to be sovereign? The fine talkers and the lawyers are spoiling everything here as they do in the metropolis. If I had the honor of being the king's lieutenant-general I would thrust all this canaille out of doors. I would say: "The king reigns and I govern. I would send responsibility along with these self-styled representatives to the devil; and with

twelve crosses of Saint Louis, promised in his majesty's name, I would sweep all the rebels into Tortuga Island, formerly inhabited by similar desperadoes, the buccaniers. Mark my words, young man, the philosophers gave birth to the philanthropists, who in turn begot the negrophiles, who have engendered the white-eaters, so called until we can find a Greek or Latin name for them. These professed liberal ideas, with which France is drunk, are a poison under the tropics. We must treat the negroes with kindness and not raise them suddenly to freedom. All the horrors you behold this day in San Domingo spring from the Massiac club, and the insurrection of the slaves is only an echo to the fall of the Bastile.'

"While the old soldier thus exposed to me his policy, narrow but full of frankness and sincerity, the stormy discussion continued. A colonist, one of the few who partook of the revolutionary frenzy, calling himself citizen-general C——, on account of having presided at some bloody executions, cried out:

"'Executions rather than battles! Nations must have terrible examples: Let us strike terror into the blacks! I allayed the revolts of June and July by planting on each side of the avenue to my dwelling the heads of fifty slaves, in lieu of

palm trees. Let each one contribute his share to the proposition I make. Let us defend the approaches to the Cape with the negroes that we have left.'

"'How! what imprudence!' echoed from all sides.

"'You do not understand me, gentlemen,' said the citizen-general. 'Let us make a cordon of negro heads around the city, from Fort Picolet to Point Caracol. Their insurgent comrades will not dare approach. In such a moment as this we must make sacrifices for the common cause. I am the first to devote myself to it. I have five hundred slaves not yet revolted; they are at your service.'

"'A shudder of horror received this execrable proposition. 'Abominable! horrible!' exclaimed all.

"'Such measures as these have already ruined us,' said a colonist. 'Had the revolted slaves of July and August not been so hastily executed we would have been able to detect the clue to the conspiracy, which the executioner's axe has severed.'

"Citizen C—— for a moment preserved an angry silence; then he muttered between his teeth: 'I cannot think I am an object of suspicion. I am connected with the negrophiles;

I correspond with Brissot and Pruneau de Pomme-Gouge in France; Hans-Sloane in England; Magaw in America; Pezll in Germany; Olivarius in Denmark; Wadstrohm in Sweden; Peter Paulus in Holland; Avendano in Spain; and the Abbé Pietro Tamburini in Italy!' His voice rose in proportion as he advanced in his nomenclature of negrophiles. He concluded at length with the remark: 'But there are no philosophers here!'

"M. de Blanchelande, for the third time, endeavored to learn the opinions of the deputies.

"'Your excellency,' said one voice, 'this is my advice. Let us all embark on board the Leopard, which is moored in the roadstead.'

"'Let us offer a reward for the head of Bouckmann,' said another.

"'Let us acquaint the Governor of Jamaica with all this,' said a third.

"'Yes; that he may send us again the derisory aid of five hundred muskets,' retorted a deputy of the Provincial Assembly. 'Let us despatch a special vessel to France, your excellency, and wait!'

"'Wait! wait!' interrupted M. de Rouvray, violently. 'Will the blacks wait? Will the flames which are already kindling about our city wait? M. de Thouzard, let the drums beat "to arms;"

take cannon and go out to meet the mass of the rebels with your grenadiers and chasseurs. Your excellency, let camps be formed in the parishes of the east; establish posts at Trou and at Vallières; I will myself take charge of the plains of Fort Dauphin. I will direct the works there; my grandfather, who was colonel of the Normandy regiment, served under Marshal Vauban; I have studied Folard and Bezout, and have some experience in the defense of a country. Besides, the plains of Fort Dauphin, almost hemmed in by the sea and the Spanish frontiers, are in the shape of a peninsula, and will in some sort protect themselves; the peninsula of the Mole offers a similar advantage. Let us make use of this and let us act!'

"'The energetic and positive language of the old veteran quickly silenced all discordant voices and opinions. The general was right. The consciousness which each one feels of his real interest, rallied all opinions around that of M. de Rouvray, and while the governor, by a grateful pressure of the hand, testified to the brave general officer that he felt the value of his counsels, though they had been uttered like orders, and the importance of his assistance, all the planters joined in demanding the prompt execution of the proposed measures.

"The two deputies of the rival assemblies alone seemed to stand aloof from the general assent, and from their respective corners kept muttering over the words, *encroachments of the executive, hasty decisions* and *responsibility*.

"I availed myself of this moment to obtain from M. de Blanchelande the orders I was impatiently desiring, and left the assemblage to get my troops together and return immediately to the Acul, regardless of the fatigue which all suffered except myself.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Day was beginning to break. I was on the parade ground awakening the militia, who were lying upon their cloaks, in inextricable confusion, pell mell with the Yellow and Red Dragoons, the fugitives of the plain, the bleating and bellowing cattle, and the goods of all kinds which had been brought into the town by the planters of the environs. I had commenced to get together my little band out of this disorder, when I saw a Yellow Dragoon, covered with sweat and dust, riding at full speed toward me. I advanced to meet him, and from the few broken sentences that escaped him, I learned with consternation that my fears had been realized; the revolt had gained the Plains of the Acul, and the blacks were besieging Fort Galifet, in which the militia and the colonists had taken refuge. I ought to say that this Fort Galifet was a very insignificant affair, any earthwork being called a fort in San Domingo.

"There was not a moment to be lost. Mounting those of my soldiers for whom I could find

A flame-colored feather waved upon his brow—Page 114.

horses, and guided by the dragoon, I reached my uncle's domains about ten o'clock in the morning.

"I scarcely gave a glance at these immense plantations, now only a sea of flames rushing over the plains with huge billows of smoke, through which the wind, from time to time, bore like cinders huge trunks of trees bristling with fire. Frightful crackling sounds mingled with roars seemed to reply to the distant howlings of the blacks, whom we already heard, but could not yet see. I had but one thought, and the destruction of such vast wealth, destined for me myself, could not distract me from it,—the safety of Marie. Marie safe, what mattered all else! I knew she was shut up within the fort, and I only prayed that I might reach it in time. This single hope sustained me in my anguish, and gave me the courage and strength of a lion.

"At length a turn in the road gave us a view of Fort Galifet. The tri-colored flag floated still above the parapet, and a well sustained fire crowned the circumference of its walls. I uttered a cry of joy! 'Gallop! put spurs to your steeds! loosen the reins!' shouted I to my companions. And redoubling our speed, we directed our course across the fields towards the fort, below which

we caught a view of the mansion of my uncle, its doors and windows broken in, but still standing, and red with the reflection from the conflagration, which had not reached it because the wind blew from the sea, and it was isolated from the plantations.

"A multitude of negroes, lying in wait in this house, showed themselves at once at every window, and even upon the roof; and torches, pikes and hatchets, glistened in the midst of the flashings of musketry, which they constantly directed against the fort, while another crowd of their comrades incessantly mounted, fell back, and again remounted the besieged walls, which they had covered with ladders. This tide of blacks, continually repulsed, and as constantly springing up again upon those grey walls, resembled at a distance a swarm of ants trying to climb the shell of a huge tortoise, of which the slow animal rids himself from time to time by a single shake.

"At length we reached the outer works of the fort. With my eyes fixed upon the flag which waved over it, I encouraged my soldiers in the name of their families shut up like mine within those walls, and to whose succor we had come. A general acclamation was the response,

and forming my little squadron in column, I prepared to give the signal for charging upon the assailing mob.

"At this moment a loud shriek rose from the interior of the Fort, a whirlwind of smoke entirely enveloped it, rolled its black folds for some moments around the walls, from which escaped a noise like the sound of a furnace; and when it cleared away we saw Fort Galifet surmounted by a red flag. All was over!

CHAPTER XVIII.

"I CANNOT express what passed through my mind at this horrible spectacle. The Fort taken, its defenders butchered, twenty families massacred! All this universal disaster, I acknowledge to my shame, occupied my thoughts not for an instant. Marie lost to me—lost to me a few short hours after those which had made her mine for ever! lost by my own fault; for had I not left her the preceding evening at my uncle's orders to go to the Cape, I might have defended her, or at least died by her side, which would have been in some sense not to lose her! These thoughts of my desolation heightened my grief even to madness. My despair was that of remorse.

"Meanwhile my exasperated companions cried out *Vengeance!* and grasping our sabres between our teeth, with pistols in both hands, we plunged headlong into the centre of the victorious insurgents. Although greatly our superiors in number, the blacks fled at our approach; but we saw them distinctly on our right and on our left,

before us and behind us, butchering the whites, and hastening to fire the fort. Their cowardice increased our fury.

"At a postern gate of the fort, Thaddeus, covered with wounds, presented himself before me.

"'Captain!' he exclaimed, 'your Pierrot is a sorcerer, an *obi*, as these accursed negroes say, or at least a devil. We were holding our ground, you were coming and all was saved, when he made his way into the fort, I know not how, and you see! As for your uncle, his family, Madame ——'

"'Marie!' I interrupted, 'where is Marie?'

"At this moment a tall black rushed from behind a burning palisade bearing a young woman, who was screaming and struggling in his arms.

"The young woman was Marie; the black was Pierrot.

"'Perfidious wretch!' I shouted. I discharged a pistol at him; one of the rebel slaves threw himself before the ball and fell dead. Pierrot turned back and appeared to address some words to me; then he sprang with his booty into the thicket of burning canes. An instant afterward an enormous dog followed him, holding in his mouth a cradle, in which was my uncle's young-

est child. I recognized the dog also; it was Rask. Transported with rage, I discharged my other pistol at him, but it missed him.

"I ran like a madman in chase, but my march for two nights, so many hours passed without repose or nourishment, my fears for Marie, the sudden transition from the summit of happiness to the lowest depths of misery, all these violent emotions of the soul had exhausted me to a still greater extent than bodily fatigue. After a few steps I reeled; a cloud spread over my eyes, and I fell fainting.

CHAPTER XIX.

"When I revived I was in the devastated mansion of my uncle and in the arms of Thaddeus. The eyes of this noble fellow were fixed upon me, full of anxiety.

"'Victory!' cried he as soon as he felt my pulse beat again; 'victory! the negroes are routed, and our captain has come to life!'

"I interrupted his cry of joy by my constant question, 'Where is Marie?' I had not yet collected my thoughts; I had the feeling but not the remembrance of my misfortune. Thaddeus hung his head.

"Then all my memory returned; I retraced in thought the horrible night of my nuptials; and the tall negro bearing off Marie in his arms through the flames rose up before me like an infernal vision. The hideous revelation which had burst upon the colony, showing to all the whites that their slaves were their enemies, discovered to me in this Pierrot, so noble, so generous, so devoted, and thrice indebted to me

for his life, an ingrate, a monster, a rival. The abduction of my wife, on the very night of our marriage, proved to me what I had from the first suspected, and at last I clearly recognized in the singer of the pavilion, none other than the execrable ravisher of Marie. In so short a period, what a change!

"Thaddeus informed me that he had vainly pursued Pierrot and his dog; that the negroes had withdrawn, though their numbers might have crushed my feeble band with ease; and that the conflagration of the estates of my family was still raging, without the possibility of being checked.

"I asked if it was known what had become of my uncle, to whose chamber they had borne me. He took me silently by the hand, led me toward the alcove, and drew aside the curtains.

"There, upon his bloody bed, lay my unfortunate uncle, a dagger driven through his heart. From the calmness of his features it was easy to see that he had been struck during sleep. The couch of the dwarf Habibrah, who customarily slept at his feet, was also stained with blood, and similar spots were observable on the laced vest of the poor fool, which had been thrown upon the floor, a few steps from the bed.

"I had not a doubt but that the buffoon had died a victim to his known attachment for my uncle; massacred by his comrades perhaps while defending his master. Bitterly did I reproach myself for the prejudice which had led me to form such wrong opinions of Habibrah and Pierrot; I mingled with the tears drawn from me by my uncle's untimely fate, regrets for his jester.

"In obedience to my orders search was made for his body, but in vain. I conjectured that the negroes had carried away the dwarf and cast him into the flames; and I ordered that in the funeral service for my father-in-law prayers should be said for the repose of the faithful Habibrah's soul.

CHAPTER XX.

"Fort Galifet was destroyed, our dwellings had disappeared; longer stay among these ruins was useless and impossible. That same evening we returned to the Cape.

"There a burning fever seized me. The effort I had made to overcome my despair had been too violent. The spring unduly bent broke. I became delirious. All my hopes deceived, my love profaned, my friendship betrayed, my future lost, and, above all, implacable jealousy, deprived me of reason. It seemed as if flames were gushing through my veins; my brain whirled round; I had furies in my heart. I pictured to myself Marie in the power of another,—in the power of a master, of a slave, of Pierrot! I have been told that then I sprang from my bed, and six men could scarcely hold me from dashing my brains against the walls. Why did I not then die?

"The crisis passed. The physicians, the care of Thaddeus, and perhaps the vigor of the vital

energies in youth, overcame the illness, this illness which might have proved so great a blessing! At the end of ten days I recovered, and I uttered no complaint. I was contented yet a while to live for vengeance!

"As soon as I was convalescent I reported myself to M. de Blanchelande for service. He wished to give me a post to defend; I conjured him to enroll me as a volunteer in one of the flying columns which were sent from time to time to scour the country.

"The Cape had been fortified with all haste. The insurrection was making fearful progress. The negroes of Port-au-Prince began to show discontent. Biassou commanded those of the Limbé, of the Dondon, and of the Acul; Jean François caused himself to be proclaimed generalissimo of the insurgents of the plain of Maribarou; Bouckmann, afterwards famous for his tragic end, overran, with his brigands, the borders of the Limonade; while the bands of the Morne-Rouge recognized for their chief a negro named Bug-Jargal.

"The character of the latter, if we might credit the accounts of him, contrasted in a singular manner with the ferocity of the others. While Bouckmann and Biassou were inventing a thousand species of torture for the prisoners who fell

into their hands, Bug-Jargal was eager to furnish them means for leaving the island. The former were driving bargains with the Spanish launches that were cruising about the coasts, and sold to them in advance the spoils of the unhappy inhabitants whom they had put to flight. Bug-Jargal sank several of those corsairs to the bottom. By his orders M. Colas de Maigné, and eight other distinguished colonists, had been detached from the wheel to which Bouckmann had caused them to be fastened. A thousand other acts of generosity were told of him, which it would be tedious to relate.

"My hope of vengeance seemed not near accomplishment. I heard no more of Pierrot. The rebels commanded by Biassou still kept the Cape in alarm. They had even on one occasion dared to attack the hill which commands the town, and the guns of the citadel had with difficulty repulsed them. The governor resolved upon forcing them back into the interior of the island. The militia of the Acul, of the Limbé, of Ouanaminte, and of Maribarou, with the Cape regiment, and the formidable companies of the Red and Yellow Dragoons, constituted our active army. The militia of the Dondon and of the Quartier-Dauphin, strengthened by a body of volunteers under

the command of the merchant Poncignon, formed the garrison of the town.

"It was the first object of the governor to rid himself of Bug-Jargal, whose movements alarmed him. He sent against him the militia of Ouanaminte and a battalion from the Cape. The expedition returned two days afterward soundly beaten.

"The governor was bent on vanquishing Bug-Jargal; he again despatched the same corps, with a reinforcement of fifty Yellow Dragoons, and four hundred militia from Maribarou. This second army was still more roughly handled than the first. Thaddeus, who took part in this expedition was very much chagrined, and swore to me on his return that he would avenge it on Bug-Jargal."

A tear fell from the eyes of D'Auverney; he crossed his arms upon his breast, and appeared for some minutes absorbed in a painful reverie; at length he continued:

CHAPTER XXI.

"THE news came that Bug-Jargal had left the Morne-Rouge, and was leading his troops by the mountains to join Biassou.

"The governor leaped for joy: 'We have him now!' he exclaimed, rubbing his hands. Next morning the colonial army was a league beyond the limits of the Cape. At our approach the insurgents precipitately abandoned Port Margot and Fort Galifet, where they had established a post defended by huge pieces of siege artillery taken from the batteries on the coast; all their bands fell back toward the mountains. The governor was triumphant. We pursued our march. Each one of us, as we traversed the arid and desolate plains, sought to bestow a last sad glance upon the spot where were his fields, dwellings, and riches; often the place could not be recognized.

"Sometimes our march was stopped by conflagrations, which from the cultivated fields had spread to the forests and the meadows. In that climate, where the earth is yet in its virgin state

and vegetation is superabundant, the burning of a forest is accompanied by singular phenomena.

"Often, before it is seen, it is heard in the distance, springing up and roaring with the deep rumbling of a swollen cataract. The crashing of the trunks of trees, the crackling of the branches, the roots snapping in the ground, the trembling of the tall herbage, the bubbling of the lakes and marshes inclosed within the forests, the whistling of the flames that devour the air, all produce a noise which rises and falls with the progress of the conflagration. Sometimes you see a green border of trees yet untouched, long surrounded by the blazing fire. Suddenly a tongue of the flames opens its way through one of the extremities of this fresh girdle; a serpent of bluish flame rapidly runs along the branches, and in a twinkling the face of the forest disappears under a veil of molten gold. All is burned at once. Then a canopy of smoke falls under a gust of wind, and envelopes the flames. It rolls and unrolls, rises and falls, dissipates and thickens, becomes suddenly black; then a kind of fiery fringe licks up the borders; a great noise is heard, the fringe is gone, the smoke mounts on high, and showers in its flight a cloud of red ashes, which long continue to fall upon the ground.

CHAPTER XXII.

"On the evening of the third day we entered the gorges of the Grande-Rivière. It was supposed that the blacks must be twenty leagues distant in the mountains. We pitched our camp upon a hill, which, from the manner in which it was trampled, seemed to have served them for the same purpose.

"Our position was not well chosen, though we were yet unmolested. The eminence was commanded on all sides by steep rocks, covered with dense forests. The asperity of these escarpments had given to this place the name of Dompte-Mulâtre.

"The Grande-Rivière flowed behind the camp; hemmed in on both sides, it was at this point narrow and deep. Its nearly perpendicular banks bristled with tufts of bushes, impenetrable to the sight. Oftentimes its waters were hidden by festoons of vines, which, clinging to the branches of the red flowering maples scattered among the bushes, married their boughs from bank

to bank, and crossing in a myriad directions formed over the river broad canopies of verdure.

"The eye which beheld them from the heights of the neighboring rocks, seemed to see meadows still moist with dew. A dull noise, or occasionallly a wild teal plunging suddenly through this flowery veil, alone disclosed the course of the river.

"The sun soon ceased to gild the sharp summits of the distant mountains of the Dondon; gradually darkness spread over the camp, and the silence was broken only by the cries of the crane, or the measured tread of the sentinels.

"Suddenly the dreadful songs of *Wa-Nassé* and the *Camp de Grand-Pré* were heard above our heads; the palms, the acomas and the cedars that crowned the rocks took fire, and the livid glare of the conflagration discovered to us upon the neighboring summits numerous bands of negroes and mulattoes, whose copper tint seemed red in the light of the flames. They were the followers of Biassou.

"The danger was imminent. The officers starting from their slumbers ran to collect their soldiers; the drum beat 'to arms;' the trumpet sounded the alarm; our lines were formed in haste and disorder; but the rebels, instead of

profiting by our confusion, remained motionless, looking at us, and continuing to sing Wa-Nassé.

"A gigantic black appeared, unattended, upon the highest of the secondary peaks which inclose the Grande-Rivière; a flame-colored feather waved upon his brow, an axe was in his right hand, a red flag in his left; I recognized Pierrot! If a carbine had been within my reach, rage would have led me to commit a base action.

"The black repeated the chorus of Wa-Nassé, planted his flag upon the peak, hurled his axe into our ranks, and then threw himself into the surges of the river. But one regret arose within me, for I feared only that he would not now die by my hand.

"Then the blacks began to roll huge rocks upon our columns; a shower of bullets and arrows fell upon the eminence. Our soldiers, enraged at not being able to reach their assailants, were perishing in despair, crushed by the rocks, riddled by balls, or pierced with arrows. Horrible confusion pervaded the army.

"Suddenly a terrific noise seemed to issue from the middle of the Grande-Rivière. An extraordinary scene was passing there; the Yellow Dragoons, severely injured by the rocky masses

which the rebels threw down from the heights or the declivities, had conceived the idea of escape by taking refuge under the flexible roof of vines with which the river was covered. Thaddeus had first put this scheme forward, ingenious as it was ——"

Here the narrator was suddenly interrupted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It had been more than a quarter of an hour since Sergeant Thaddeus, with his right arm in a sling, had slipped unperceived into a corner of the tent, where his gestures alone had expressed the interest which he took in the story of the captain, until now, when not deeming it respectful to allow so direct a eulogy to pass without thanking D'Auverney, he began to stammer in a confused tone:

"You are very kind, my captain."

There was a general burst of laughter, D'Auverney turned, and exclaimed in a severe tone:

"What, sir; you here, Thaddeus! and your arm?"

At this language, so strange to him, the features of the old soldier grew dark; he staggered, and threw up his head as if to check the tears which gathered in his eyes.

"I did not believe," he said at length, in a low voice, "I never would have believed that my

captain could so far forget his old sergeant as ever to call him sir."

The Captain hastily rose from his seat.

"Pardon me, my old friend, pardon me; I knew not what I said; stay, Thad, will you pardon me?"

Tears started from the eyes of the Sergeant in spite of himself.

"See! this is the third time," he stammered out; "but these are tears of joy."

Peace was restored. A short silence ensued.

"But tell me, Thad," demanded the Captain gently, "why did you leave the surgeon's quarters to come here?"

"It is because, by your leave, it is because I came to ask you, my captain, if I should put the ornamental housing on your charger to-morrow."

Henri burst out into a laugh:

"You would have done better to ask the surgeon if you must put two ounces of lint to-morrow on your wounded arm."

"Or to inform you," said Paschal, "if you might drink a little wine to refresh yourself; meanwhile here is some brandy, which cannot fail to do you good; try it my brave sergeant."

Thaddeus advanced, made a respectful bow,

excused himself for taking the glass in his left hand, and drank to the health of the company. He grew animated.

"You were, my captain, where —— Oh yes! it was I who proposed to crawl under the vines to prevent good Christians from being crushed by stones. Our officer, who could not swim, was afraid of being drowned, which was very natural, and opposed it with all his might, until he saw, by your leave, gentlemen, a large flint-stone which just missed him, fall upon the river without sinking, because of the herbage. 'It is better,' he then exclaimed, 'to die like Pharaoh of Egypt than like St. Stephen. We are not saints, and Pharaoh was a soldier like ourselves.'

"My officer, a learned man as you perceive, was very willing to take my advice, provided I would first make the trial. I consented. I descended along the bank, leaped beneath the arbor, holding on to the branches above, when I felt myself seized by the leg: I struggled, I shouted for help, I got several sabre cuts, and then the whole troop of dragoons, like so many devils, came tumbling down pell-mell under the arbor. The blacks of the Morne-Rouge had concealed themselves there without our suspecting it, in order to fall upon our backs,

like a loaded sack, the moment afterward. That would not have been a very good time for fishing.

"They fought, they swore, they screamed. As they were naked they were more active than we; but our blows told better than theirs. We swam with one arm and fought with the other, as one has to do in such cases. Those who knew not how to swim suspended themselves by one hand to the vines, and the blacks caught them by their feet and drew them down.

"In the midst of this turmoil, I saw a great negro who was defending himself like a very Satan against eight or ten of my comrades; I swam toward him, and recognized Pierrot, or Jar——, but that should not come in till by and by; should it, captain? I recognized Pierrot. Since the taking of the Fort we had been against each other. I seized him by the throat, he was on the point of ridding himself of me by a thrust of his poinard, when he looked at me, and instead of killing me, surrendered, which was very unfortunate, captain, for if he had not surrendered —— but this will be seen by and by. As soon as the negroes saw that he was taken, they leaped like so many tigers upon us to rescue him, so that the

militia were about to jump into the water to assist us, when Pierrot seeing, doubtless, that the negroes would all be massacred, uttered a few words, which were real witchcraft, for it put them all to flight. They plunged and disappeared in a twinkling. This battle under the water would have been very agreeable and amusing, no doubt, if I had not lost a finger in the struggle, and wet ten cartridges, and if —— poor man! but so it was written, captain."

And the Sergeant, after touching his cap with the back of his left hand, raised it toward heaven with an air of inspiration.

D'Auverney appeared very much agitated. "Yes," said he, "yes, you are right, my old friend, that night was a night of fate."

He was on the point of falling into one of those deep reveries, which had become habitual with him, had not the assemblage eagerly pressed him to continue. He resumed:

CHAPTER XVIV.

"WHILE the scene that Thaddeus has described" (Thaddeus, with an air of triumph, approached and placed himself behind the Captain) "while the scene that Thaddeus has described was passing behind the hill, I had, with some of my company, by dint of climbing from bush to bush, attained a peak called the Pic du Paon, from the iridescent tints which the mica upon its surface presented to the rays of the sun. This peak was on a level with the position of the blacks. The way once opened, the summit was soon covered with militia; we opened an active fire. The negroes, with poorer arms than our own, could not return the fire with equal effect; they began to grow discouraged; we redoubled the fury of our attack, and soon the nearest rocks were evacuated by the rebels, who meanwhile took care to roll the bodies of their dead down upon the remainder of the army, which was still drawn up in battle array upon the old eminence.

"We then felled, and bound together with palm leaves and cords, several trunks of those enormous wild cotton-trees, out of which the aborigines of the island made pirogues for a hundred rowers. By the aid of this improvised bridge, we passed over to the abandoned peaks, and a part of the army was thus posted in an advantageous position. At this sight the courage of the blacks gave way. We kept up our fire; piteous cries, with which the name of Bug-Jargal was mingled, suddenly echoed through the army of Biassou. Great alarm was manifested. Many of the blacks of the Morne-Rouge appeared upon the rock where floated the scarlet flag; they prostrated themselves, carried away the standard, and then plunged with it into the chasms of the Grande-Rivière. This seemed to signify that their chief was dead or taken.

"Our courage increased to such a pitch, that I resolved to drive the rebels, with cold steel, from the rocks which they still occupied. Having caused a bridge of the trunks of trees to be thrown from our peak to the nearest rock, I myself rushed first into the midst of the negroes. My men were about to follow me, when one of the rebels, by one blow of his hatchet, made the bridge fly into splinters. The

fragments tumbled into the abyss, dashing upon the rocks with a frightful noise.

"I turned my head; at this moment I felt myself seized by six or seven blacks, who disarmed me. I struggled like a lion; they bound me with withes of bark, heedless of the bullets which my brave fellows rained about them.

"My despair was tempered only by the shouts of victory which a moment afterward I heard lifted up around me; I saw the blacks and mulattoes in confusion clambering up the steepest summits, uttering cries of distress. My keepers followed their example; the most vigorous of their number placed me upon his shoulders, and bore me toward the forests, leaping from rock to rock with the agility of a chamois. The glare of the flames soon ceased to guide him, but the feeble light of the moon sufficed to direct his steps and he began to lessen his speed.

CHAPTER XXV.

"After traversing thickets and crossing torrents, we reached a high valley of a singularly wild aspect. This place was wholly unknown to me.

The valley was situated in the very heart of the ridges, in what is called in San Domingo The Double Mountains. It was a large green meadow, imprisoned within walls of naked rocks, sprinkled over with tufts of pines, gayacs and palmistes. The piercing cold air, which reigns almost continually in this region of the island, though it never freezes, was intensified by the dampness of the night, which was scarcely over. Dawn began to illumine the high surrounding summits, while the valley, still plunged in profound darkness, was lighted only by a multitude of fires kindled by the negroes; for this was their rallying point.

"The broken members of their army there collected in disorder. The blacks and the mulattoes from time to time arrived in wild bands, with

cries of distress, or with howlings of rage. Fresh fires, sparkling like the eyes of a tiger, throughout the dark savanna, indicated every moment that the circle of the camp was widening.

"The negro, whose prisoner I was, had placed me at the foot of an oak, whence I observed this singular spectacle with indifference. The black fastened me by the girdle to the trunk of the tree against which I was leaning, tightened the double knots, which fettered all my movements, placed upon my head his cap of red wool, doubtless to indicate that I was his property; and after he had thus made sure that I could neither escape, nor be taken from him by others, he prepared to depart.

"I resolved to speak to him; I asked him in the Creole patois if he was of the band of the Dondon or of the Morne-Rouge. He paused and replied with an air of pride, Morne-Rouge!

"A thought struck me. I had heard of the generosity of the chief of that band, Bug-Jargal, and though without a single pang resigned to a death which would deliver me from all my misfortunes, the idea of the tortures that awaited me if I should suffer at the hands of Biassou, nevertheless inspired me with horror. I asked

nothing more than to die without these tortures. It was perhaps a weakness, but I believe that in such moments our human nature always recoils. I thought if I could get rid of Biassou, I might perhaps from Bug-Jargal obtain death without torture, the death of a soldier.

"I asked this negro of Morne-Rouge to conduct me to his chief Bug-Jargal. He started up, 'Bug-Jargal!' he said, striking his forehead with despair; then passing suddenly to an expression of fury, he cried, shaking his fist at me, 'Biassou! Biassou!' After this threatening name he left me.

"The anger and grief of the negro recalled to me that incident of the battle, from which we had inferred the capture or death of the chief of the Morne-Rouge bands. I no longer doubted his fate, and I resigned myself to the vengeance of Biassou, with which the black seemed to menace me.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"MEANWHILE darkness yet covered the valley, in which the multitude of the blacks and the number of fires continually increased. A group of negresses came to kindle a fire near me. By the numerous bracelets of blue, red, and purple glass, that glistened like scales upon their arms and legs; by the ornaments which loaded their ears; by the rings which embellished their fingers and toes; by the amulets fastened upon their bosoms; by the charmed necklaces hung around their necks; by the aprons of colored feathers which alone veiled their nakedness; and above all, by their noisy cadences, and their wild and haggard looks, I recognized the Griotes.

"You are not, perhaps, aware, that there are among the blacks of many African countries, negroes endowed with a rude talent of poetry and improvisation, resembling madness. These negroes, wandering from kingdom to kingdom, are in those barbarous countries what the ancient rhapsodists were, what the minstrels of

England, the minnesingers of Germany, and the troubadours of France were in the middle ages. They are called Griots. Their women, possessed, like themselves, of a frantic demon, accompany the barbarous songs of their husbands by wanton dances, presenting a grotesque parody on the bayaderes of Hindostan, and the Egyptian almées. These were the women who seated themselves in a circle a few steps from me, their legs bent under them in the African manner, around a great heap of dry branches, which in burning made its red light tremble upon their hideous faces.

"As soon as their circle was formed they joined hands, and the eldest, who wore a heron's feather in her hair, began to cry, '*Wanga!*' I understood that they were about to carry on one of those sorceries, which they designate by that name. All repeated '*Wanga!*' The eldest, after a short silence to compose herself, tore out a handful of her hair and cast it into the fire, pronouncing the infernal words: '*Malé o guiab!*' which, in the jargon of the Creole negroes, signifies: *I will go to the devil!* All the Griotes, imitating their senior, delivered to the flames a lock of their hair, gravely repeating, '*Malé o guiab!*'

"This strange invocation, and the burlesque grimaces by which it was accompanied, drew from me that species of involuntary convulsion which, in spite of himself, frequently seizes upon the most serious man, even when most grievously afflicted, and which is called the maniac laugh. I endeavoured in vain to repress it. It burst forth of itself. This laugh escaping from a sad heart, gave occasion for a scene singularly gloomy and frightful.

"The negresses, disturbed in their mysteries, rose up as if startled out of a deep slumber. They had not until now been aware of my presence. They ran tumultously towards me, howling '*Blanco! blanco!*' I have never seen an assemblage of faces so diversely horrible as were all these black visages in their fury, with their dazzling teeth, and the whites of their eyes, crossed with large veins swollen with blood.

"They were ready to tear me to pieces. The eldest, she of the heron plume, gave a signal, and cried out with frequent repetitions,' *Zoté cordé! zoté cordé!*'[1] The furies suddenly paused, and I saw them, with deep surprise, all at once, unfasten their feather aprons, cast them upon

[1] Come on! come on!

the grass, and commence around me that lascivious dance, which the blacks call La Chica.

"This dance, whose grotesque attitudes and lively movements express nothing but pleasure and gaiety, at that time borrowed from various accessory circumstances an ill-omened character. The demoniac glances cast upon me by the Griotes in the midst of their wanton evolutions; the doleful accents which they gave to the joyous air of La Chica; the shrill and lengthened groan that the venerable president of the black sanhedrim drew from time to time from her balafo (a species of spinnet which hums like a small organ, composed of a score of wooden pipes, diminishing gradually in length and thickness); but above all the horrible laugh which each naked sorceress at certain pauses in the dance presented to me in her turn, almost touching her black face to mine, announced to me but too clearly what frightful tortures awaited the *blanco* profaner of their Wanga.

"I recalled to mind the custom of those savage nations who dance around their prisoners previous to their massacre, and waited patiently for these women to execute the ballet of the drama, to which I was to furnish a bloody denouement. I could not but shudder when I

saw, at a moment marked by the balafo, each Griote place in the burning flames the point of a sabre, the blade of a hatchet, the extremity of a long sail-needle, the prongs of a pincer, or the teeth of a saw.

"The dance drew near its end; the instruments of torture were red hot. At a signal from the old woman the negresses moved in procession, seeking in the fire some horrid weapon of torture.

"Those who could not furnish themselves with a glowing iron, took a burning brand. Then I clearly comprehended what tortures were in store for me, and that I should find in each danseuse an executioner. At another signal from their leader they recommenced a last round, with frightful lamentations. I closed my eyes, that I might no longer behold the antics of these female demons, who, breathless with fatigue and rage, kept time with each other by striking their burning blades together above their heads, which produced a sharp clash and myriads of sparks. I awaited in agony the moment when I should feel my flesh tortured, my bones calcined, my nerves curling under the burning bite of the pincers and saws, and a cold shudder ran through all my members. It was a moment of horror.

"Happily it did not last long. The Chica of the Griotes was just ending, when I heard in the distance the voice of the negro who had made me prisoner. He ran towards them, crying out, '*Que haceis, mugeres de demonio? Que haceis allí? Dexaïs mi prisionero!*'[1] I opened my eyes. It was already broad daylight. The negro with a thousand angry gestures ran bounding toward me. The Griotes paused; but they seemed less moved by his threats than amazed at the presence of a strange looking person by whom the black was accompanied.

"He was a very short and very fat man, a sort of dwarf, whose face was hidden by a white veil, pierced with three holes for the eyes and mouth, after the manner of penitents. This veil, which fell over his neck and shoulders, left his hairy chest naked, the color of which appeared to me to be that of the griffes, and upon which shone a mutilated silver remonstrance, suspended by a gold chain.

"The cross-shaped handle of a dagger was seen protruding above a scarlet belt which upheld a skirt striped with green, yellow and black, the fringe of which descended to his broad misshapen

[1] What are you doing, devil's wives? What are you doing there? Let my prisoner alone.

feet. His arms, bare like his breast, brandished a white wand; a chaplet of adrezarach beads hung from his belt near the dagger, and his head was covered by a conical cap ornamented with little bells, in which, as he approached me, I was not a little surprised at recognizing Habibrah's gorra. Among the hieroglyphics, however, with which this species of mitre was covered, one could observe stains of blood. It was, doubtless, the blood of the faithful buffoon. These traces of murder appeared to me a new proof of his death, and awakened in my heart a final regret.

"As soon as the Griotes perceived this heir of Habibrah's cap, they cried out, as with one voice, '*The obi!*' and fell prostrate to the ground. I conjectured that this was the sorcerer of Biassou's army. '*Basta! basta!*' said he, with a deep and solemn voice, on coming near them, '*dexais el prisionero de Biassou!*'[1] The negresses all started up hastily, cast away their instruments of death, resumed their feather aprons, and at a signal from the obi disappeared like a swarm of locusts.

"At this moment the eyes of the obi appeared to fasten on me; he started, fell back a step,

[1] Stop! Stop! Release Biassou's prisoner.

and waved his white wand toward the Griotes as if he would recall them. However, after muttering the word *maldicho*,[1] and whispering a few words in the ear of the negro, he slowly withdrew, crossing his arms in an attitude of deep meditation.

[1] A curse on my luck.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"My guard now apprised me that Biassou had asked to see me, and that I must be prepared in an hour to endure an interview with him.

"There yet remained to me, then, one more hour of life. While awaiting its passage, my eyes wandered over the rebel camp, the singular appearance of which daylight now disclosed to me in its minutest details.

"In any other frame of mind I could not have repressed a laugh at the misplaced vanity of the blacks, who were nearly all loaded with military and priestly ornaments, despoiled from their victims. Most of these ornaments were now no more than tattered and bloody rags. It was not rare to see a gorget shining under a priest's band, or an epaulette upon a chasuble.

"Indeed, for the purpose of relaxation from that toil to which they had all their lives been condemned, the negroes were enjoying an inactivity unknown to our soldiers, even when in

camp. Some were sleeping in the broad sunlight with their heads near a burning fire; others, with eyes alternately dull and furious, were singing a monotonous air, squatted upon the threshold of their *ajoupas*, a species of hut covered with the leaves of the banana or palm-tree, the conical form of which resembles our artillery tents.

"Their women, black or copper-colored, assisted by the children, were preparing the food of the combatants. I saw them stirring with pitchforks the yams, bananas, potatoes, peas, cocoa-nuts, maize, the carib cabbage which they call tayo, and a variety of other indigenous fruits, which were boiling up around quarters of pork, turtle and dog-flesh, in large kettles stolen from the dwellings of the planters.

"In the distance, on the borders of the camp, the Griotes formed large groups around their fires; their wild songs, snatches of which the wind bore to me, mingling with the tones of guitars and balafos.

"A few sentinels stationed on the summits of the neighbouring rocks, watched the head-quarters of Biassou, whose only intrenchment in case of attack was a circular cordon of wagons, loaded with booty and munitions of war. These

black sentinels, standing erect upon the sharp points of the granite pyramids, with which the mountains bristled, frequently turned around, like the weather-cocks on gothic spires, shouting to each other with all their might, the cry which announced the security of the camp: '*Nada! nada!*'[1]

"From time to time groups of curious negroes gathered about me. All looked at me threateningly.

[1] Nothing! nothing!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"At length a platoon of colored soldiers well armed marched toward me. The black to whom I seemed to belong unfastened me from the tree to which I was bound, and delivered me to the chief of the squad, from whose hands he received in exchange a large bag, which he instantly opened. It was filled with dollars. While the negro, kneeling upon the grass, was eagerly counting his prize, the soldiers led me away. I surveyed their equipment with much curiosity. They wore a uniform of coarse cloth, reddish-brown and yellow, cut in the Spanish style. A kind of Castilian *montera*, ornamented with a large red cockade,[1] concealed their woolly hair. In place of a cartridge-box they had something resembling a game-bag fastened upon their hips. Their arms consisted of a heavy musket, a sabre and a dagger. I afterwards learned that this was the uniform of Biassou's body-guard.

"After several circuits among the irregular

[1] This color is that of the Spanish cockade.

ranges of ajoupas, which encumbered the camp, we arrived before the entrance of a cave hewn out by nature, at the foot of one of those huge ledges of rocks by which the meadow was walled in. A large curtain, of a Thibet stuff called cashmere, which is less distinguished for the brilliancy of its colors than for its varied designs and soft texture, closed to the eye the entrance of the cavern. It was surrounded by several double lines of soldiers equipped like those who had led me thither.

"After passing the watchword with the two sentinels who stood guard before the grotto, the leader of the squad raised the cashmere curtain, and introduced me, letting it fall behind me.

"A copper lamp with five wicks, suspended by chains from the roof, cast a flickering light upon the damp sides of this cavern, shut out from the light of day. Between two lines of mulatto soldiers, I perceived a colored man seated upon an enormous block of mahogany, half covered by a carpet of paroquet feathers.

"This man belonged to the sacatras, who are lighter than the pure blacks only by one degree, often imperceptible. His costume was ridiculous. A magnificent sash of raw silk, to which hung a cross of St. Louis, retained about his

hips a pair of coarse blue cotton drawers; a waistcoat of white dimity, too short to reach even to his sash, completed his apparel. He wore gray boots, a round hat surmounted by a red cockade, and epaulettes, one of gold with the two silver stars of a field-marshal, the other of yellow wool. Two copper stars, apparently the fixtures of spurs, had been fastened upon the latter, doubtless to render it worthy of figuring with its brilliant companion. These two epaulettes, not being confined in their proper places by transverse loops, hung dangling down on either side of the breast of the chief. A sabre and pistols, richly damasked, lay upon the feather carpet near him.

"Behind his throne stood silent and motionless two children clothed in the dress of slaves, each bearing a large fan of peacock feathers. These two slave children were white.

"Two cushions of crimson velvet, which seemed to have belonged to the prie-dieu of some presbytery, marked two seats on the right and left of the mahogany block. One of these places, that on the right, was occupied by the obi who had wrested me from the fury of the Griotes. He was seated, his legs folded under him, holding his wand erect, and as motionless as a porce-

lain idol in a Chinese pagoda. Still, through the apertures of his veil, I saw his glittering eyes constantly fixed upon me.

"On each side of the chief were bundles of flags, banners and standards of every description, among which I noticed the white flag of the fleur-de-lis, the tri-colored flag, and the flag of Spain. The others were fanciful ensigns. Among them was a large black standard.

"At the end of the room, above the head of the chief, another object attracted my attention. It was the portrait of the mulatto Ogé, who had been broken on the wheel the preceding year for the crime of rebellion, along with his lieutenant, Jean Baptiste Chavanne, and twenty other blacks, or sang-mêlés. In this portrait, Ogé, the son of a butcher of the Cape, was represented, as he usually had himself painted, in the uniform of a lieutenant-colonel, with the cross of Saint Louis and the badge of the Order of the Lion, which he had purchased in Europe of the Prince of Limbourg.

"The sacatra chief, to whom I was presented, was of medium height. His ignoble features indicated a rare mixture of craft and cruelty. He bade me approach, and eyed me for some time in silence; then he burst into a giggle like a hyena.

"'I am Biassou,' said he to me.

"I was prepared to hear that name; but I could not hear it from those lips, in the midst of that ferocious laugh, without an internal shudder. My countenance, however, remained calm and proud. I made no reply.

"'Well!' resumed he, in very bad French; 'have you been impaled already that you cannot bend your back bone in the presence of Jean Biassou, generalissimo of the conquered countries, and field-marshal of the armies of *Su Magestad Catolica?*' (The policy of the principal rebel chiefs was to pretend that they were acting at one time for the king of France, again for the Revolution, and sometimes for the king of Spain.)

"I crossed my arms upon my breast, and gazed at him with a fixed stare. He began to giggle. This was a trick of his.

"'Oh! oh! *me pareces hombre de buen corazon.*[1] Well, listen to what I have to say. Are you a Creole?'

"'No,' I replied, 'I am a Frenchman.' My assurance made him frown. He continued, giggling as he spoke:

"'All the better. I see by your uniform that you are an officer. How old are you?'

[1] You seem to me a man of good pluck.

"'Twenty years.'

"'When did you reach that age.'

"At this question, which awakened within me such bitter recollections, I remained a moment absorbed in my struggling thoughts. He repeated it quickly. I replied: 'The day that your companion, Léogri, was hung.'

"Anger contracted his features; his giggling was prolonged. Still he restrained himself.

"'It is twenty-three days since Léogri was hung,' he replied; 'Frenchman, to-night you can tell him from me that you have lived twenty-four days longer than he. I wish to leave you in the world for this one day, so that you may tell him in what the liberty of his brothers consists; what you have seen at the head-quarters of Jean Biassou, field-marshal, and what the authority of this generalissimo is over the *gens du roi*.'

"Under the latter title, Jean François, who called himself *grand admiral of France*, and his comrade Biassou, designated their hordes of revolted negroes and mulattoes.

"Then he ordered me to be seated in a corner of the cave between two guards, and making a signal with his hand to some negroes, who were huddled into the dress of aides-de-camp:

"'Beat to arms; let all the army assemble in front of our head-quarters, that we may review it. And you, Mr. Chaplain,' said he, turning towards the obi, 'clothe yourself in your priestly vestments, and celebrate for us and our soldiers the holy sacrifice of the mass.'

"The obi arose, made a low bow before Biassou, and whispered a few words in his ear, which the chief hastily interrupted with a loud voice.

"'You have no altar, you say, señor cura! is that at all surprising in these mountains? But what matters it! How long since the *bon Giu*[1] has needed for his worship a magnificent temple, an altar ornamented with gold and laces? Gideon and Joshua adored him before heaps of stone; let us do as they did, *bon per!*[2] It is enough for the bon Giu if our hearts are fervent. You have no altar! Well, can not you make one out of that big sugar-box taken day before yesterday by the gens du roi, in Dubuisson's plantation?'

"Biassou's intention was promptly executed. In a twinkling the interior of the grotto was arranged for this parody of the divine mystery. A tabernacle and a holy pyx were brought, which

[1] The Creole patois for *bon Dieu*, the "Good God."

[2] The Creole patois for *bon père*, "good father."

"Commend your soul to St. Sabas, deacon and martyr, your patron saint."—Page 207.

had been taken from the parish church of the Acul, from the very temple in which my union with Marie had received the heavenly benediction, so speedily followed by misfortune. They erected as an altar the stolen sugar-box, which was covered with a white sheet instead of an altar cloth, but that did not prevent one from reading on the sides of this altar:

"'DUBUISSON & Co., NANTES.'

"When the holy vessels had been placed upon the cloth, the obi perceived that a cross was wanting; he drew his dagger, whose horizontal guard presented the desired form, and planted it upright between the chalice and the ostensoir before the tabernacle. Then, without taking off his sorcerer's cap, or his penitent's veil, he promptly threw over his back and naked breast the cope stolen from the prior of the Acul, opened near the tabernacle the silver-clasped missal from which the prayers had been read at my fatal marriage, and turning towards Biassou, whose seat was some steps from the altar, announced, by a profound salutation, that he was ready.

"Immediately upon a signal from the chief, the cashmere curtains were lifted up and dis-

covered to us the entire black army, drawn up in solid squares before the opening of the grotto. Biassou took off his round hat and kneeled in front of the altar.

"'On your knees!' he cried, with a loud voice. 'On your knees!' repeated the chiefs of each battalion. A roll of the drums was heard. All the hordes were on their knees.

"I alone remained motionless upon my seat, shocked at the horrible profanation which was about to be committed before my eyes; but the two vigorous mulattoes who guarded me, pulled away the seat from under me, pushed me forcibly by the shoulders, and I fell upon my knees like the rest, compelled to render a shadow of reverence to this shadow of worship.

"The obi officiated with gravity. The two little white pages of Biassou performed the offices of deacon and sub-deacon. The multitude of rebels still continuing prostrate, witnessed the ceremony with a composure of which the generalissimo gave the first example. At the moment of the elevation, the obi, raising in his hands the consecrated host, turned toward the army and exclaimed in the Creole jargon: '*Zoté coné bon Giu; ce li mo fé zoté voer. Blan touyé li, touyé*

blan yo toute!''[1] At these words, pronounced in a loud voice, which I thought I had heard somewhere before, the whole horde uttered a fearful roar; for some time they clashed their arms, and nothing less than the safe-guard of Biassou hindered this ominous outcry from sounding my death-knell. I then understood to what excesses of courage and atrocity men could be borne whom a dagger served for a cross, and upon whose minds every impression is so electrical and so deep.

[1] You know the good God; it is He whom I now show you. The whites have killed him; kill all the whites. Afterwards Toussaint Louverture used to address the same words to the negroes, after partaking of the communion.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"The ceremony ended, the obi turned again towards Biassou with a respectful reverence. Then the chief arose, and addressing me, said in French:

"'We are accused of having no religion; you see it is calumny, and that we are good Catholics.'

"I know not whether he spoke ironically or seriously. A moment afterward, he caused a glass vessel full of kernels of black corn to be brought; he threw into it a few kernels of white corn; then raising the vessel above his head, to be the better seen by all the army, he said:

"'Brothers, you are the black corn; the whites, your enemies, are the white corn!'

"At these words he shook the vase, and when nearly all the white kernels had disappeared under the black, he cried out with an air of inspiration and triumph: '*Guetté blan ci la la!*'[1]

"A fresh acclamation, repeated by all the

[1] See what the whites are compared with you.

echoes of the mountains, welcomed the parable of the chieftain. Biassou continued, frequently interlarding his bad French with Spanish and Creole phrases.

"'*El tiempo de la mansuetud es pasado.*[1] We have long been as patient as the sheep to whose wool the whites compare our locks; henceforth let us be implacable as the panthers and jaguars of the countries from which they have torn us. Force alone can secure rights; all things belong to him who will show himself powerful and pitiless. Saint Wolf has two feasts in the Gregorian Calendar, the Paschal Lamb has but one! Is it not true, Mr. Chaplain?'

"The obi bowed assent.

"'They have come,' pursued Biassou, 'they have come, the enemies of the regeneration of humanity, these whites, these colonists, these planters, these men of traffic, *verdaderos demonios*, vomited from the mouth of Alecto! *San venidos con insolencia*;[2] these haughty ones were covered with armor, with gay colors, with clothes magnificent to the view, and they despised us because we were black and naked. They thought in their pride they could scatter

[1] The time for forbearance is past.

[2] They have come with insolence.

us as easily as these peacock feathers drive away swarms of gnats and musquitoes!'

"As he finished this comparison, he snatched from the hand of a white slave one of the fans, which he made them hold behind him, and shook it above his head with many vehement gestures. He resumed:

"'But, oh my brothers, our army fell upon theirs like vultures upon a corpse; they are fallen with their fine uniforms under the blows of these naked arms which they thought weak, ignorant that the generous wood grows harder when stripped of its bark. They tremble, now, these hated tyrants! *Yo gagné peur!*'[1]

"A prolonged howl of joy and triumph responded to this exclamation of the chief, and all the hordes for a long time repeated the words, '*Yo gagné peur!*'

"'Blacks, Creoles, and Congoes,' added Biassou, 'vengeance and liberty! Sang-mêlés, do not allow yourselves to be moved by the seductions *de los diabolos blancos.* Your fathers are in their ranks but your mothers are in ours. Besides, *o hermanos de mi alma*,[2] they have never treated you as fathers should, but as masters; you were slaves

[1] In the Creole jargon, They are afraid.

[2] O brothers of my soul!

like the blacks. While a miserable wrapper scarcely covered your limbs from the scorching sun, your barbarous fathers were strutting about under *buenos sombreros*, clad in nankin waistcoats on week days, and on holidays dressed in coats of bouracan or velvet, *a diez y siete quartos la vara*.[1] A curse on such unnatural beings!

"'But since the holy commandments of the *bon Giu* forbid it, you must not yourself strike your own father. Should you meet him in the ranks of the enemy, what hinders you, *amigos*, from saying one to another, "*Touyé papa moé, ma touyé quena toué?*"[2] Vengeance, *gens du roi!* Freedom to all men! This cry is echoed through all the isles; it has gone forth from Quisqueya,[3] it has awakened Tobago and Cuba. It is a chief with an hundred and twenty-five maroon negroes from the Blue Mountain, a black from Jamaica, it is Bouckmann who has raised his standard among us. A victory has been his first act of brotherhood with the blacks of San Domingo. Let us follow his glorious example, the torch in

[1] At seventeen quartos la vara (a Spanish measure, nearly equal to an ell French).

[2] Kill my father and I will kill yours. Mulattoes have really been overheard pronouncing these execrable words, compromising in this manner with parricide.

[3] The former name of San Domingo, which signifies *Great-earth*. The aborigines also called it Aïty.

one hand, the axe in the other. No quarter to the whites, to the planters! Let us massacre their families; let us lay waste their plantations; let us not leave a tree upon their domains, unless with the root upwards. Let us overturn the earth that it may swallow up the whites! Courage, then, friends and brothers! We will soon march forth to fight and to exterminate. We will conquer or die. Conquerors, we shall enjoy in our turn all the joys of life; dying, we shall go to heaven, where the saints await us in paradise, where each brave will receive a double measure of *aguardiente*[1] and a dollar a day!'

"This sort of soldier-like sermon, which no doubt appears very ridiculous to you, gentlemen, produced a wonderful effect upon the rebels. In truth the extraordinary pantomime of Biassou, the inspired accents of his voice, the strange sneering laugh with which he accompanied his words, gave to his harangue mysterious powers of delusion and fascination. The art with which he wove into his discourse details calculated to flatter the passions or the interest of the rebels, gave a degree of strength to this eloquence so appropriate to his auditory.

[1] Brandy.

"I shall not attempt to describe to you the deep enthusiasm which was manifested throughout the insurgent army after the harangue of Biassou. It was a discordant concert of screams, of groans, and of howlings. Some beat their breasts, others clashed their clubs and sabres. Many, kneeling or prostrate, preserved the attitude of motionless ecstacy. The negresses scarified their bosoms and their arms with the fish-bones which they used instead of combs to smooth their hair. Guitars, tantams, drums and balafos mingled their sounds with the discharge of musketry. It was something like a Sabbat.

"Biassou waved his hand; the tumult ceased as if by a miracle; each negro fell back into his place in silence. This discipline, to which Biassou had inured his equals by the mere ascendency of thought and will, struck me with admiration. All the soldiers of this rebel army appeared to speak and move under the hand of the chief, like the strings of a harpsichord under the fingers of a musician.

CHAPTER XXX.

"ANOTHER sight, another species of charlatanism and wizardry now arrested my attention: the treatment of the wounded. The obi, who discharged in the army the double functions of physician of the soul and physician of the body, had commenced the inspection of the sick. He had laid aside his priestly garments, and commanded the production of a large case with compartments, in which were his drugs and instruments. He rarely made use of his surgical utensils, with the exception of a lancet of fish-bone, which he used very skillfully in blood-letting; he seemed to me quite awkward, especially in the management of the tweezers, which served him for pincers, and the knife which took the place of the bistoury. He confined himself principally to prescribing ptisans of wild orange, infusions of squills and sarsaparilla, and swallows of old rum. His favorite remedy, which he pronounced sovereign, was composed of three glasses of red wine, in which he mixed a powdered nut-

meg and the yolk of an egg well roasted in the ashes. He employed this specific to cure all sorts of wounds or diseases.

"You can readily conceive that his medical practice was as ridiculous as the worship of which he was the minister; and it is probable that the small number of cures which he chanced to effect would not have sufficed to preserve to the obi the confidence of the blacks, had he not added juggleries to his drugs, and sought to make up by acting upon their imaginations what he failed to effect upon their maladies. Thus, he would sometimes limit himself to touching their wounds, while describing a few mysterious signs; again, making a skillful use of the remnants of old superstitions which were mingled with their recently assumed Catholicism, he bound on their wounds a small fetish stone, covered with lint; and the patient attributed to the stone the beneficial effects of the lint. Were it announced to him that such an one under his care had died of his wounds, and perhaps of his treatment: 'I foresaw it,' he would reply with a solemn voice. 'He was a traitor; in the burning of such a plantation, he saved a white; his death is a punishment!' And the multitude of astonished rebels would applaud, with more

and more embittered feelings of hatred and vengeance.

"The charlatan, among other means of cure, employed one which struck me by its singularity. It was for one of the black chiefs, dangerously wounded in the last battle. He examined the wound for a long while, and dressed it in his best style, when, ascending to the altar, he exclaimed, 'All this is nothing!' Then he tore three or four leaves from the Missal, burnt them in the flame of the tapers robbed from the Church of the Acul, and mixing the ashes of this consecrated paper with some drops of wine poured into the chalice: 'Drink,' said he to the wounded man; 'this is the remedy.'[1] The other drank it off in silence, fixing a look full of confidence upon the juggler, who held his hands raised above him as if imploring the blessing of Heaven; and perhaps the faith that he was cured, helped to cure him.

[1] This remedy is still in frequent use in Africa, particularly among the Moors of Tripoli, who often throw the ashes of a page of the Koran into their beverage, and thus compound a philtre, to which they attribute sovereign virtue. An English traveler, whose name has escaped me, terms this beverage "*an infusion of Alcoran.*"

CHAPTER XXXI.

"ANOTHER scene in which the veiled obi was still the principal actor, succeeded to the last: the priest had become the physician; the physician became the sorcerer.

"'*Hombres, escuchate!*'[1] exclaimed the obi, leaping with incredible agility upon the temporary altar, where he seated himself with his legs folded under his parti-colored skirt; '*escuchate, hombres!* Let those who would read in the book of destiny the secret of their life, approach; I will tell it. *He estudiado la ciencia de los Gitanos.*'[2]

"A crowd of blacks and mulattoes rushed toward him. 'One at a time!' exclaimed the obi, whose hollow voice sometimes assumed that squealing tone which struck me like an old acquaintance; 'if you all come at once, you will all fall together into the grave.'

[1] "Men, listen." The signification which the Spaniards attach to the word *hombre* cannot be translated. It is more than *man* and less than *friend*.

[2] I have studied the science of the Egyptians.

"They stopped short. Just then a colored man, clad in a white vest and pantaloons, his head bound with a madras handkerchief, in the style of the rich planters, presented himself before Biassou. Consternation was depicted upon his countenance.

"'Well!' said the generalissamo in a whisper, 'what now? What is the matter, Rigaud?' This was the mulatto leader of the band from Aux Cayes, afterwards known as General Rigaud, a man of great art under an appearance of candor, and cruel under an air of gentleness.

"'General,' replied Rigaud (and he spoke very low, but being placed near Biassou I overheard his message), there is just entering the camp a messenger from Jean François. Bouckmann has been killed in an engagement with M. de Touzard, and the whites have exposed his head as a trophy in their city.'

"'Is that all?' asked Biassou; and his eyes sparkled with secret joy, to learn that the number of chiefs was diminishing and that his own authority was consequently increasing.

"'The messenger of Jean François has a further message to deliver to you.'

"'Very well!' replied Biassou. 'Put away that pale face of yours, my dear Rigaud.'

"'But,' objected Rigaud, 'do you not fear, General, the effect of Bouckmann's death upon your army?'

"'You are not as simple as you appear to be, Rigaud,' responded the chief; 'you shall see what Biassou is. Delay for fifteen minutes the entrance of the messenger.'

"Then he approached the obi, who, during this dialogue, which was overheard by me alone, had commenced his office of diviner, interrogating the astounded negroes, examining the marks upon their foreheads and hands, and distributing more or less happiness for the future, according to the sound, the color, and the size of the piece of money cast by each negro into a dish of silver-gilt at his feet. Biassou whispered a few words in his ear. The sorcerer, without interrupting his duties, continued his metoposcopic operations.

"'Whoever,' said he, 'bears in the middle of his forehead, upon the wrinkle of the sun, a small square or triangle, will make a great fortune, without trouble or labor.

"'The figure S thrice repeated, in whatever part of the forehead it is found, is a very unlucky sign; whoever bears it will certainly be drowned, unless he avoids the water with the utmost care.

"'Four lines parting from the nose and curving in pairs upon the forehead above the eyes, announce that the bearer will be a prisoner, and will groan in captivity among strangers.'

"Here the obi made a pause.

"'Companions,' he added gravely, 'I have observed this sign upon the brow of Bug-Jargal, chief of the braves of the Morne-Rouge.'

"These words, which to me were an additional confirmation of the capture of Bug-Jargal, were followed by the loud lamentations of a band composed only of blacks, whose leaders were clad in scarlet drawers: it was the band of the Morne-Rouge.

"Meantime the obi resumed:

"'If you have upon the right side of the forehead, on the line of the moon, a figure which resembles a fork, fear to remain idle or indulge in excesses.

"'A little sign very important, the Arabic figure 3 upon the line of the sun, foretells a cudgeling.'

"An aged negro of Spanish Domingo interrupted the sorcerer. He dragged his limbs toward the obi, imploring a dressing for his wound. He had been hit in the forehead, and one of his eyes, torn from the socket, hung down, still dripping

with blood. The obi had omitted him in his medical review. As soon as he noticed him, he exclaimed:

"'Round figures on the right side of the forehead, upon the line of the moon, foretell diseases of the eyes. *Hombre,*' said he to the miserable wounded man, 'this sign is very apparent on your face; let us see your hand.'

"'*Alas! exelentissimo señor,*' replied the other, '*mir' usted mi ojo!*'[1]

"'Fatras,'[2] replied the obi testily, 'I do not need to see your eye—your hand, I say!' The poor wretch extended his hand, still murmuring, '*mi ojo!*'

"'Good!' said the sorcerer. 'If you find upon the line of life a point surrounded by a small circle, the bearer will be blind of one eye, because this figure announces the loss of an eye. There, look at the point and the little circle; you will be blind of one eye.'

"'*Ya le soy,*'[3] replied the fatras, with a piteous groan. But the obi, who was no longer a surgeon, had rudely repulsed him, and continued, without heeding the complaint of the poor negro:

[1] Alas! most excellent lord, look at my eye.

[2] A name under which they designate an old negro unfit for labor.

[3] That I am already.

"'*Escuchate, hombres!* If the seven lines of the forehead are small, crooked, feebly marked, they foretell a man whose life will be short.

"'Whoever has between the eyebrows, upon the line of the moon, the figure of two arrows crossing each other, will die in battle.

"'If the line of life which traverses the hand presents a cross at its extremity near the joint, it foretells that the bearer will be seen upon a scaffold. And here,' observed the obi, 'I must tell you, *hermanos*, that one of the bravest supporters of our independence, Bouckmann, bears these three fatal signs.'

"At these words all the negroes held their breath; their eyes were motionless, and fastened upon the juggler, expressing that sort of attention which resembles stupor.

"'But,' added the obi, 'I cannot reconcile this double sign, which threatens Bouckmann at the same time with a battle and a scaffold. Nevertheless, my art is infallible.'

"He paused and exchanged a glance with Biassou. Biassou whispered a few words in the ear of one of his aides-de-camp, who instantly left the grotto.

"'An open and drooping mouth,' resumed the obi, turning again to his auditory with his ma-

licious and jeering accent, 'an insipid attitude, arms hanging down, and the left hand turned back without any apparent reason, announces natural stupidity, nothingness, emptiness, a besotted curiosity.'

"Biassou giggled outright. Just then the aide-de-camp returned, conducting a negro covered with mud and dust, whose feet, torn by stones and briars, testified that he had made a long and hasty journey. It was the messenger announced by Rigaud. He held in one hand a sealed packet, in the other an open parchment, impressed with a seal the device of which was a burning heart. In the midst was a cipher formed of the characteristic letters M and N, intermingled, without doubt, to express the union of the free mulattoes and negro slaves. Beside this cipher I read this inscription: 'Prejudice overcome, the rod of iron broken; *vive le roi!*' This parchment was a passport given by Jean François.

"The messenger presented it to Biassou, and after bending to the ground in reverence, placed in his hand the sealed packet. The generalissimo quickly broke the seal, ran over the dispatches it contained, then putting one in his vest pocket, and crushing the other in his hands, he exclaimed with a disconsolate air:

"'*Gens du roi!*'——

"The negroes bowed reverently.

"'*Gens du roi!* Listen to the message sent to Jean Biassou, generalissimo of the conquered countries, marshal of the camps and armies of his Catholic Majesty, from Jean François, Grand Admiral of France, Lieutenant-General of the armies of his Majesty aforesaid, the King of Spain and the Indies:

"'"Bouckmann, leader of the hundred and twenty blacks of the Blue Mountain in Jamaica, recognized as independent by the Governor-General of Belle-Combe, Bouckmann has just fallen in the glorious struggle of liberty and humanity against despotism and barbarism. The generous chief has been killed in an engagement with the white brigands of the infamous Touzard. The monsters have cut off his head, and have announced that they intend to expose it ignominiously upon a scaffold in the parade-ground in Cape Haytien. Vengeance!"'

"The deep silence of discouragement for a moment succeeded. But the obi had mounted the altar, and cried out, shaking his white wand with triumphant gestures:

"'Solomon, Zorobabel, Eleazar Thaleb, Cardan, Judas Bowthericht, Averroès, Albert the Great,

Bohabdil, Jean de Hagen, Anna Baratro, Daniel Ogrumof, Rachel Flintz, Altornino! I return you thanks. The *ciencia* of the seers has not deceived me. *Hijos, amigos, hermanos, muchachos, mozos, madres, y vosotros todos qui me escuchais aquí,*[1] what did I predict? *que habia dicho?* The signs on Bouckmann's forehead announced that he would live but a short time, and that he would die in a battle, and the lines of his hand, that he would be seen on a scaffold. The revelations of my art have been faithfully realized, and events have arranged themselves so as to fulfill even those circumstances which we could not reconcile—death on the battle-field and the scaffold! Brothers, admire!'

"During this discourse the discouragement of the blacks had changed into a kind of wondering affright. They listened to the obi with a confidence mingled with terror; the latter, intoxicated with his success, strutted back and forth over the length and breadth of the sugar-box, whose surface offered sufficient space for the easy display of his diminutive steps. Biassou giggled.

"He addressed the obi:

[1] Sons, friends, brothers, young men, boys, mothers, and all you who listen to me here.

"'Mr. Chaplain, since you know all things to come, it is our pleasure that you should read what is to befall our fortunes, what is to happen to us, Jean Biassou, *mariscal de campo.*'

"The obi pausing proudly upon the grotesque altar, where the credulity of the blacks had made him a divinity, said to the *mariscal de campo: 'Venga, vuestra merced!'*[1]

"At that moment the obi was the important man of the army. The military power yielded to the sacerdotal. Biassou approached. One could read in the glance of his eye a trace of vexation.

"'Your hand, General,' said the obi, stooping to receive it. '*Empezo.*[2] The line of the joint, equally clear throughout its length, promises you riches and happiness. The line of life, long, distinctly marked, foretells a life exempt from evils, a green old age; narrow, it designates your wisdom, your fertile wit, the *generosidad* of your heart; finally, I see what the *chiromancos* call the most fortunate of all signs, a collection of small wrinkles giving the form of a tree loaded with branches, and which rise toward the upper part of the hand; it is the certain prognostic of opulence and greatness. The line of

[1] Come, your grace! [2] I begin.

health, very long, confirms the indications of the line of life; it also marks courage; curved towards the little finger, it forms a sort of hook. General, that is the sign of a useful severity.'

"At these words the bright eye of the little obi was fixed upon me through the aperture of his veil, and I again noticed a familiar tone somewhat concealed under the habitual gravity of his voice. He continued with the same purpose of gesture and intonation.

"'Filled with small circles, the line of health announces a great number of necessary executions that you have to order. It is interrupted in the middle, forming a semi-circle; a sign that you will be exposed to great dangers from ferocious beasts, that is to say the whites, if you do not exterminate them.

"'The line of fortune, surrounded like the line of life with little branches which rise toward the upper part of the hand, confirms the future power and supremacy to which you are called; straight and slender in its upper portion, it announces your talents for government. The fifth line, that of the triangle, prolonged toward the root of the middle finger, promises the happiest issues to all your enterprises.

"'Let us see the fingers. The thumb, marked

lengthwise by small lines, which reach from the nail to the joint, promise you a rich inheritance. Bouckmann's glory, without doubt!' added the obi in a loud voice. 'The little eminence which forms the root of the fore-finger is covered with small wrinkles, faintly marked: honors and dignities! The middle finger betokens nothing. Your ring finger is furrowed with lines crossing each other: you will conquer all your enemies; you will rule all your rivals! These lines form Saint Andrew's crosses, a sign of genius and faith. The joint which unites the little finger to the hand offers crooked lines: fortune will load you with favors. I see also the form of a circle, another presage which announces to you power and dignities!

"'"Happy," says Eleazer Thaleb, "he who bears all these signs! Destiny is charged with his prosperity and his star will bring him the genius that gives glory." Now, General, let me read your forehead. "Whoever," says Rachel Flintz the Gipsy, "bears on the middle of his forehead upon the wrinkle of the sun, a small square or triangle, will be very fortunate." Here it is well defined. "If this sign is on the right it promises an important succession"—Bouckmann again. The sign of a horse-shoe between the eyebrows

above the wrinkle of the moon, announces that one knows how to avenge himself of injury and tyranny. I bear this sign; you bear it also.'

"The manner in which the obi pronounced the words *I bear this sign*, struck me again.

"'It is observed,' he added in the same tone, 'upon all those brave men who can plan a courageous revolt and break their chains. The lion's claw, which is marked over your eyebrow, testifies your brilliant courage. Finally, General Jean Biassou, your forehead presents the most astonishing of all signs of prosperity: it is a combination of lines that form the letter M, the first in the name of the Virgin. In whatever part of the forehead, upon whatever wrinkle this figure appears, it announces genius, glory and power. He who bears it will always triumph in any cause he may embrace; those whom the bearer shall command will have no loss to regret; he alone will be equal to all the defenders of his party. You are the chosen of destiny!'

"'*Gratias*, Mr. Chaplain,' said Biassou, preparing to resume his seat upon the mahogany throne.

"'Stay, General,' resumed the obi, 'I had forgotten one sign. The line of the sun, strongly marked upon your forehead, proves that you un-

derstand yourself, that you have the desire to bestow happiness, that you have great liberality, and a taste for magnificence.'

"Biassou appeared to comprehend that the forgetfulness was on his part rather than on that of the obi. He drew from his pocket a heavy purse and threw it into the silver plate, to maintain the credit of his line of the sun.

"Meanwhile the dazzling horoscope of the chief had produced its effect upon the army. All the rebels, upon whom the words of the obi had become more powerful than ever since the news of Bouckmann's death, passed from discouragement to enthusiasm, and blindly trusting to their infallible sorcerer and their predestined General, began to vie with each other in howling, '*Vive l'obi! vive Biassou!*' The obi and Biassou looked at each other, and I thought I heard the stifled laugh of the obi responding to the giggle of the generalissimo.

"I know not why this obi so perplexed my ideas; it seemed to me that I had already seen or heard elsewhere something which resembled this singular being; I longed to hear him speak.

"'Mr. Obi, *señor cura, doctor medico,* Mr. Chaplain, *bon per,*' I said to him.

"He turned abruptly toward me.

"'There is one here whose horoscope you have not drawn; it is I.'

"He folded his arms upon the silver sun that covered his hairy breast, and made me no reply. I continued:

"'I am anxious to know what you can augur of my future life; but your honest comrades have taken away my watch and purse, and you are not a conjuror to prophesy gratis.'

"Advancing hastily close to me he said faintly in my ear:

"'You deceive yourself! Let me see your hand.'

"I presented it to him, looking him full in the face. His eyes glistened; he appeared to be examining my hand.

"'If the line of life,' said he, 'is cut toward the middle by two small transverse and very distinct lines, it is the sign of a speedy death. Your death is near!

"'If the line of health is wanting in the middle of the hand, and there is but the line of life and the line of fortune joined at their origin so as to form an angle, one should not expect with this sign a natural death. Expect not then a natural death!

"'If the fore-finger is marked through its whole length by a line, one will die a violent death. Do you hear? prepare yourself for a violent death!'

"There was something of joy in this sepulchral voice, that announced my death. I heard it with indifference and contempt.

"'Sorcerer,' I said with a smile of disdain, 'you are skillful, you prognosticate with certainty.'

"He approached me again.

"'You doubt my science! Well! listen once more: the rupture of the line of the sun upon your forehead, tells me that you take an enemy for a friend and a friend for an enemy.'

"The meaning of these words seemed to refer to the perfidious Pierrot, whom I had loved and who had betrayed me, and to the faithful Habibrah whom I hated, and whose bloody vestments attested his courageous and devoted death.

"'What mean you?' I demanded.

"'Listen to the end,' answered the obi. 'I have told you the future, behold the past. The line of the moon is slightly curved upon your forehead; that signifies that your wife has been taken away.'

"I shuddered; I would have rushed from my seat; my guard held me fast.

"'You are impatient,' resumed the sorcerer; 'listen now to the end. The little cross which cuts the extremity of this curved line completes the explanation. Your wife was taken from you the very night of your nuptials ——.'

"'Wretch!' I exclaimed, 'you know where she is! who are you?' I attempted again to free myself and to tear his veil from him; but I was compelled to yield to numbers and to force, and with rage I saw the mysterious obi leave me saying, 'Do you believe me now? Prepare for speedy death!'

CHAPTER XXXII.

"The new drama, which succeeded under my eyes to the ridiculous comedy that Biassou and the obi had enacted before their astonished bands, was needed to distract me a moment from the perplexity into which this strange scene had thrown me.

"Biassou was re-seated upon his mahogany throne; the obi was at his right and Rigaud at his left hand upon the two cushions which accompanied the throne of the chief. The obi, with his arms crossed upon his breast, appeared to be absorbed in profound contemplation; Biassou and Rigaud were chewing tobacco; and an aide-de-camp had just entered to ask the *mariscal de campo* if it was his pleasure that the army file off, when three tumultuous groups of negroes arrived with furious clamors at the entrance of the cave. Each of these bands brought a prisoner, whom they desired to place at the disposal of Biassou, not so much to know whether he would grant them mercy as to know his good

pleasure respecting the kind of death the unhappy captives should suffer. Their ominous cries but too plainly announced them: '*Mort! mort! Muerte! muerte!*'—'Death! Death!' cried some English negroes, who doubtless belonged to the horde of Bouckmann, and who had already come to join the French and Spanish blacks of Biassou.

"By a motion of his hand the *mariscal de campo* imposed silence, and caused the three captives to advance to the threshold of the grotto. With surprise I recognized two; one was the citizen-general C——, this philanthropic correspondent of all the négrophiles on the globe, who had given such cruel advice respecting the slaves in the council at the Governor's palace: the other was the equivocal planter, who had such indomitable repugnance to the mulattoes, among whom the whites counted him. The third appeared to belong to the class of poor whites; he wore a leather apron and had his sleeves tucked up above his elbows. All three had been surprised separately while seeking to hide in the mountains.

"The poor white was first interrogated.

"'Who are you?' said Biassou to him.

"'I am Jacques Belin, carpenter to the Fathers' Hospital at the Cape.'

"Surprise, mingled with shame, was expressed in the eyes of the generalissimo of the conquered countries.

"'Jacques Belin,' said he, biting his lips.

"'Yes,' replied the carpenter, 'do you not know me?'

"'Begin yourself,' said the *mariscal de campo*, 'by recognizing and saluting me.'

"'I do not bow to my slave,' answered the carpenter.

"'Your slave, wretch!' exclaimed the generalissimo.

"'Yes,' answered the carpenter, 'I am your first master. You pretend not to know me; but remember, Jean Biassou, I sold you for thirteen dollars to a Domingan merchant.'

"Rage contracted every feature of Biassou.

"'What!' continued the carpenter, 'you appear ashamed of having been my slave! Jean Biassou ought to feel honored by having belonged to Jacques Belin! Your own mother, the old fool! has very often swept out my shop; but now I have sold her to the steward of the Fathers' Hospital; she is so decrepit that he would give me but thirty-two francs and six sous odd money for her. There, you have your history and hers: but it appears you have grown

proud, you negroes and mulattoes, and that you have forgotten the time when you served, on your knees, Master Jacques Belin, carpenter at the Cape.'

"Biassou had listened to him with that ferocious grin which gave him the appearance of a tiger.

"'Very well,' said he.

"Then turning to the negroes who had brought in Master Belin:

"'Get two saw-horses, two boards and a saw, and take away this man. Jacques Belin, carpenter of the Cape, thank me for having procured you the death of a carpenter.'

"His laugh completed the explanation of the horrible torture with which the pride of his old master was about to be punished. I shuddered; but Jacques Belin did not move a muscle; he turned proudly to Biassou:

"'Yes! I ought to thank you, for I sold you for thirteen dollars, and you certainly brought me more than you are worth.'

"They took him away.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"The other two prisoners, more dead than alive, had witnessed this frightful prologue to their own tragedy. Their humble and terrified attitude contrasted strangely with the somewhat boastful fortitude of the carpenter.

"Biassou looked from one to the other with his fox-like scrutiny; then wishing to prolong their agony, he entered into conversation with Rigaud concerning the different species of tobacco, affirming that Havana tobacco was good only for smoking in the form of cigars, and that he knew no better Spanish tobacco for snuff than that of which the late Bouckmann had sent him two barrels, taken from M. Lebattu, proprietor of the island of Tortuga. Then suddenly addressing the citizen-general C——:

"'What do you think about it?' he asked.

"This unexpected apostrophe made the citizen reel. He stammered out:

"'I agree, General, with the opinion of your Excellency.'

"'The words of a flatterer,' replied Biassou. 'I asked you for your opinion, not mine. Do you know of any better tobacco for snuff than that of M. Lebattu?'

"'No, indeed, my Lord,' said C——, whose perplexity was a rich fund of amusement to Biassou.

"'General! Excellency! my Lord!' repeated the chief, impatiently, 'you are an aristocrat!'

"'Oh! indeed I am not!' cried the citizen-general; 'I am a good patriot of '91, and a warm negrophile!'

"'*Negrophile*,' interrupted the generalissimo, 'what is a negrophile?'

"'It is a friend of the blacks,' stammered out the citizen.

"'It is not enough to be a friend of the blacks,' rejoined Biassou with severity; 'a man must also be a friend to men of color.'

"I think I have already mentioned that Biassou was a *sacatra*.

"'Men of color was what I intended to say,' replied the negrophile, humbly. 'I am connected with all the most famous partizans of the negroes and mulattoes.'

"Biassou, happy in humiliating a white, again interrupted him:

"'*Negroes and mulattoes!* What do you mean? Do you come here to insult us with these odious names, invented by the contempt of the whites! There are here only men of color and blacks; do you understand me, Mr. Colonist?'

"'It is a bad habit I contracted in childhood,' answered C——; 'pardon me, I had no intention to offend you, my lord——'

"'Let alone your *my lord;* I repeat it, I hate these aristocratic manners.'

"C——, anxious to excuse himself, began to stammer out a new explanation:

"'If you but knew me, citizen——'

"'*Citizen!* who do you take me for?' shouted Biassou angrily. 'I detest this jargon of the Jacobins. Perhaps you are a Jacobin. Do you know that you are addressing the generalissimo of the *gens du roi? Citizen!* You insolent wretch!'

"The poor negrophile no longer knew how to address this man, who equally rejected the titles of *my lord* and of *citizen,* the language of the aristocrats and that of the patriots; he was confounded. Biassou, whose anger was only feigned, found cruel enjoyment in his embarrassment.

"'Alas!' said the citizen-general, 'you judge me very wrongfully, noble defender of the imprescriptable rights of half the human race——.'

"In his difficulty at finding any sort of title for this chief, who appeared to refuse them all, he had recourse to one of those sonorous periphrases which the revolutionists had substituted for the name and title of the person whom they were haranguing.

"Biassou gazed steadily at him and replied:

"'Then you love the blacks and *sang-mêlés?*'

"'Do I love them?' exclaimed citizen C——; 'I correspond with Brissot and ——'

"Biassou interrupted him, grinning:

"'Ha! ha! I am delighted to find in you a friend of our cause. In this case you ought to detest the miserable colonists who have punished our just insurrection with the most cruel tortures; you ought to think as we do, that the whites, and not the blacks, are the real rebels, since they revolt against nature and humanity: you ought to execrate these monsters!'

"'I do execrate them!' replied C——.

"'Well!' continued Biassou, 'what would you think of a man who, in order to suppress the last movements of the slaves, would plant the heads of fifty blacks on either side the road to his house?'

"The pallid hue of C——'s countenance became frightful.

"'What would you think of a white who could propose to surround Cape Haytien with a cordon of slaves' heads?'

"'Mercy! mercy!' cried the terrified citizen-general.

"'Do I threaten you?' replied Biassou coldly. 'Let me finish—with a cordon of slaves' heads, extending from Fort Picolet to Cape Caracol? What would you think of that, eh? answer me!'

"The words of Biassou, '*do I threaten you?*' had given C—— some hope; he thought that perhaps the chief had heard of these horrors without knowing their author, and he replied with some confidence in order to anticipate every presumption against himself:

"'I think these are atrocious crimes.'

"Biassou giggled. 'Good! and what punishment would you inflict on the guilty wretch?'

"Here the unhappy C—— hesitated.

"'Very well!' resumed Biassou, 'are you the friend of the blacks or not?'

"Of the two alternatives the negrophile chose the least threatening, and remarking in the eyes of Biassou nothing hostile to himself, he said in a feeble voice:

"'The guilty man merits death.'

"'Very well answered,' said Biassou quietly, as he threw away his quid of tabacco.

"Meanwhile his indifferent manner had restored some assurance to the poor negrophile; he made an attempt to remove all suspicions which could weigh against himself:

"'No one,' he exclaimed, 'has offered more ardent prayers than I have for the triumph of your cause. I correspond with Brissot and Pruneau de Pomme-Gouge in France; Magaw in America; Peter Paulus in Holland; the Abbé Tamburini in Italy ——'

"He was proceeding in a complacent way to put forth this philanthropic litany which he eagerly recited, and which he had rehearsed under other circumstances and for another end to M. de Blanchelande, when Biassou stopped him short:

"'Well! of what use are all your correspondents to me? Only point out to me where your magazines are, your depôts: my army is in want of munitions. Your plantations are doubtless very rich; your commercial house must be very strong since you correspond with all the merchants in the world.'

"Citizen C—— hazarded a timid observation:

"'Hero of humanity, these are not merchants; they are philosophers, philanthropists, negrophiles.'

"'Come, come!' said Biassou, shaking his head; 'here he is again back at his devils of unintelligible words. So, then, you have neither stores nor warehouses to be pillaged? What are you good for?'

"This question presented a ray of hope, upon which C—— eagerly seized.

"'Illustrious warrior,' he answered, 'have you an economist in your army?'

"'What is that?' demanded the chief.

"'It is,' said the prisoner with as much emphasis as his fears would permit, 'it is a man most indispensably necessary; one who alone can appreciate at their respective values the material resources of an empire, who arranges them in the order of their importance, classes them according to their value, improves and meliorates them by combining their sources and results, and distributes them in their appropriate channels, like so many fertilizing streams in the great river of general utility, which in its turn tends to enlarge the sea of public prosperity.'

"'*Caramba!*' said Biassou, leaning toward the obi. 'What the deuce does he mean by these

words, strung together like the beads of your chaplet?'

"The obi shrugged his shoulders in token of ignorance and contempt. Meanwhile, citizen C—— continued:

"'I have studied, deign to hear me, valiant chief of the brave regenerators of San Domingo; I have studied the great economists, Turgot, Raynal and Mirabeau, the friend of man! I have put their theory in practice. I understand the science indispensable to the government of kingdoms or any other states.'

"'The economist is not economical of words!' said Rigaud, with his gentle bantering smile.

"'Tell me then, boaster!' exclaimed Biassou, 'have I kingdoms and states to govern?'

"'Not yet, great man,' replied C——, 'but they may come; and besides my science descends without derogation to details useful for the administration of an army.'

"The generalissimo again rudely interrupted him:

"'I do not administer my army, Mr. Planter, I command it.'

"'Very well,' observed the citizen, 'you will be the General, I will be the Commissary. I have

some private information concerning the multiplication of cattle ——'

"'Do you think we raise cattle?' said Biassou with a sneer; 'we eat them. When the cattle of the French colony fail me, I shall pass the hills on the frontier and take the Spanish oxen and sheep raised on the heights of the great plains of Cotuy, La Vega, Santiago, and upon the banks of the Yuna; if necessary I shall go still further for those that feed in the peninsula of Samana and behind the mountains of Cibos, from the mouths of the Neybe to beyond Santo-Domingo. Besides, I shall be delighted to punish those cursed Spanish planters; it is they who delivered up Ogé! You see I am in no want of means of support, and that I have no need of your indispensably necessary science!'

"This vigorous declaration disconcerted the poor economist; he made another attempt, however.

"'My studies have not been confined to the raising of cattle. I have other special knowledge that may be very useful to you. I can point out the way to manage the turpentine trade and coal mines.'

"'What is that to me!' said Biassou. 'When

I want coal I burn three leagues of forest at once.'

"'I can teach you the proper use of each species of wood,' pursued the prisoner; 'the chicaron and the sabiecca for the keels of vessels; the yabas for the knees; the tocumas[1] for the ribs; the hacamas, the gayacs, the cedars, the acomas ——'

"'*Que te lleven todos los demonios de los diez y siete infiernos!*'[2] exclaimed Biassou impatiently.

"'Do you like my proposition, my gracious patron?' said the economist in tremor, not understanding Spanish.

"'Listen,' replied Biassou, 'I have no need of vessels. There is only one place vacant in my suite; it is not that of *mayor-domo*, it is the place of valet de chambre. See, *señor* philosopher, if it will suit you. You will serve me on your knees; you will bring me my pipe, my calalou,[3] my turtle-soup; you will carry behind me a peacock or parokeet feather fan, like those two pages whom you see. Humph! answer; will you be my valet de chambre?'

"Citizen C——, who had but one thought, and that to save his life, bent to the ground

[1] The medlar.
[2] May all the devils of the seventeen hells take you.
[3] A creole ragout.

with a thousand demonstrations of joy and gratitude.

"'You accept, then?' said Biassou.

"'Can you doubt, my generous master, that I hesitate for a moment before so distinguished a favor as that of serving your person?'

"At this reply, the diabolical giggling of Biassou burst forth. He folded his arms, rose with an air of triumph, and kicking the head of the white prostrate before him, he exclaimed in a loud voice:

"'I was willing to see how far the cowardice of the whites can go, after having experienced the extent of their cruelty. Citizen C——, it is to you that I owe this double example. I know you! How have you been so stupid as not to perceive it? It was you who presided over the tortures of June, July and August; it was you who planted the sides of your avenue with the heads of fifty blacks; it was you who wished to cut the throats of the five hundred negroes remaining in your shackles after the revolt, and to encompass the city with a cordon of slaves' heads from Fort Picolet to Cape Caracol. You would have made, if you could, a trophy of my head; and now, you think yourself happy if I would take you for my valet de chambre. No! no!

I am more careful of your honor than you are yourself; I will not put this affront on you! Prepare to die!'

"He made a signal, and the blacks placed the unfortunate negrophile near me, who, unable to utter a word, had fallen at his feet as if stricken by a thunderbolt.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"'It is your turn now!' said the chief turning toward the last of the prisoners, the planter suspected by the whites of being a sang-mêlé, who had sent me a challenge for this imputation.

"A general clamor from the rebels stifled the planter's reply. 'Muerte! muerte! Mort! Death! Touyé! Touyé!' they shouted, gnashing their teeth, and shaking their fists at the unhappy captive.

"'General,' said a mulatto, who expressed himself more clearly than the others, 'he is a white; he must die.'

"The poor man, by force of signs and cries, at length made himself heard: 'No, no, General! no, my brothers; I am not a white! It is an abominable calumny! I am a mulatto, a sang-mêlé like yourselves, the son of a negress like your mothers and your sisters!'

"'He lies!' said the furious negroes. 'He is white! He has always detested the blacks and the men of color!'

"'Never!' replied the prisoner. 'It is the whites I detest. I am one of you, brothers. I have always said with you: *Nègre cé blan, blan cé nègre!*'[1]

"'No, no!' cried the multitude; '*touyé blan, touyé blan!*'[2]

"The poor wretch, bitterly lamenting his fate, continued to repeat, 'I am a mulatto, I am one of you.'

"'The proof?' said Biassou coolly.

"'The proof,' replied the other in his bewilderment, 'is that the whites have always despised me.'

"'That may be true,' answered Biassou; 'but you are an insolent fellow.'

"A young sang-mêlé quickly addressed the prisoner: 'The whites despised you, it is true; but, on the other hand, you affected to despise the sang-mêlés, among whom they ranked you. I have even been told that you one day challenged a white, who reproached you with belonging to our caste.'

"A universal shout arose from the indignant

[1] A popular expression among the revolted negroes, of which a literal translation is: "the negroes are the whites, the whites are the negroes." The meaning would be better rendered thus: "the negroes are the masters, the whites are the slaves."

[2] Kill the white! kill the white!

crowd, and the cries of death, more violent than ever, overwhelmed the justification of the planter, who, casting upon me a side glance of disappointment and entreaty, said again with tears, 'It is a calumny! I have no other glory, no other happiness, than to belong to the blacks. I am a mulatto.'

"'If you were really a mulatto,' observed Rigaud quietly, 'you would not make use of the term.'[1]

"'Alas! do I know what I say?' continued the miserable man. 'General, the proof that I am a sang-mêlé is this black circle that you can see around my nails.'[2]

"Biassou repulsed the suppliant hand. 'I have not the science of Mr. Chaplain, who divines who you are by the inspection of your hand. But listen: our soldiers accuse you, some that you are white, others that you are a false brother. If it be so, you ought to die. You maintain that you belong to our caste and that you have never denied it. There is but one method left of proving what you assert and of saving your life.'

[1] It must be remembered that the men of color angrily reject this appellation, invented, as they say, by the contempt of the whites.

[2] Many sang-mêlés bear this mark at the root of the nails; it is effaced by age, but reappears in their children.

"Leopold," said she, "my Leopold!"
"Marie," I answered, "and ——"—Page 248.

"'What, General, what is it?' asked the colonist eagerly. 'I am ready.'

"'This,' said Biassou coldly. 'Take this stiletto and stab these two white prisoners.'

"While speaking he designated us by a glance and a motion of the hand. The colonist recoiled with horror at the stiletto which Biassou, with an infernal smile, presented him.

"'Well, well!' said the chief, 'you hesitate! It is, however, the only means of proving to me, and also to my army, that you are not a white, and that you are one of us. Come; decide; you make me lose time.'

"The eyes of the prisoner rolled wildly about. He took a step toward the dagger, then let his arms fall, and stopped, turning away his head. A thrill of horror made him tremble in every limb.

"'Come, make haste!' cried Biassou, in an impatient and angry tone. 'I am in a hurry. Choose whether you will kill them yourself, or die with them.'

"The planter remained motionless, as if petrified.

"'Very well,' said Biassou, turning toward the negroes, 'he will not be the executioner, he shall be the victim. I see that he is a white; take him away. As for you——'

"The blacks advanced to seize the colonist.

This movement decided his choice between death to be given and death to be received. The excess of cowardice has its courage also. He seized the dagger which Biassou offered him, and without giving himself time to reflect upon what he was doing, the wretch threw himself like a tiger upon citizen C——, who was lying near me.

"Then commenced a horrible struggle. The negrophile, plunged into a sullen stupid despair by the denouement of the questioning with which Biassou had tormented him, had witnessed the scene between the chief and the sang-mêlé planter with a glazed eye, and so absorbed in the terror of his approaching torture, that he had not seemed to comprehend it; but when he saw the colonist fall upon him, and the blade gleam over his head, the imminence of the danger aroused him suddenly. He leaped up and seized the arm of the assassin, exclaiming, in a mournful voice:

"'Mercy, mercy! What would you? What evil have I done you?'

"'You must die, sir,' replied the sang-mêlé, seeking to disengage his arm, and fixing his haggard eyes upon his victim. 'Offer no resistance, and I will do you no harm.'

"'Die at your hand?' said the economist, 'and wherefore? Spare me! You are, perhaps, angry

at me because I once said you were a sang-mêlé? But spare me my life, and I protest that I recognize you as a white. Yes, you are a white; I will proclaim it everywhere; but mercy——'

"The negrophile had chosen the wrong method of defense.

"'Hold your tongue,' cried the furious sang-mêlé, fearing lest the negroes might have overheard his supplication. But the other did not hear, and continued to howl out that he knew him to be a white, and of a very good family. The sang-mêlé made a final effort to reduce him to silence, violently threw off both the hands which held him, and plunged his dagger through the clothes of citizen C——. The unfortunate wretch felt the point of the steel, and in a fury seized in his teeth the arm that had stabbed him. 'Monster, wretch, you have assassinated me.' He cast one look toward Biassou: 'Defend me, thou avenger of humanity!'

"But the assassin pushed heavily upon the dagger; a stream of hot blood spirted out upon his hand and into his face. The knees of the unhappy negrophile suddenly relaxed, his arms sank, his eyes were quenched, his lips uttered a heavy groan. He fell dead.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"This scene, in which I was expecting soon to play my part, had chilled my blood with horror. The avenger of humanity had viewed the struggle of his victims with an impassive eye. When it was ended he turned toward his terrified pages: 'Bring me some tobacco,' he said, and began to chew it quietly. The obi and Rigaud were immovable, and the negroes themselves appeared frightened at the terrible spectacle which their chief had given them.

"There was yet another white to stab, myself; my turn had come. I cast a glance on this assassin who was soon to be my executioner. He excited my pity. His lips were purple; his teeth chattered; a convulsive motion, with which all his limbs trembled, made him stagger; his hand incessantly and mechanically moved across his forehead, as if to wipe away the traces of blood, and he gazed with a senseless look upon the reeking corpse extended at his feet. His haggard eyes were riveted upon his victim.

"I was awaiting the moment when he should finish his task by my death. I stood in a singular relation to this man; he had already failed to kill me to prove that he was a white; he was now about to assassinate me to prove that he was a mulatto.

"'Come,' said Biassou to him, 'it is well. I am pleased with you, friend!' He looked at me and added: 'I will excuse you the other. You may go; we declare you a good brother, and we name you executioner to our army.'

"At these words of the chief a negro left the ranks, bowed three times before Biassou, and exclaimed in his jargon, which I will translate to facilitate your understanding of it: 'And what for me, General?'

"'Well, what do you want?' inquired Biassou.

"'Are you not going to do something for me, General?' said the negro. 'Here! you have just given preferment to this dog of a white, who makes himself an assassin to be recognized as one of us. Will you not also promote me who am a good black?'

"This unexpected request appeared to embarrass Biassou; he leaned toward Rigaud, and the chief of the troops from Aux-Cayes said to him

in French: 'We cannot satisfy him, try to elude his demand.'

"'To promote you?' said Biassou to the *good black;* 'I ask nothing better. What grade do you desire?'

"'I wish to be an *oficial.*'[1]

"'An officer,' replied the generalissimo; 'well, what are your claims to an epaulette?'

"'It was I,' replied the black with emphasis, 'who set fire to the plantation of Lagoscette, in the forepart of August. It was I who massacred M. Clement, the planter, and carried about the head of his refiner on the end of a pike. I have killed ten white women and seven little children; one of them served the brave blacks of Bouckmann for an ensign. Since then I have burned four colonists' families, in a chamber of Fort Galifet, that I fastened with a double lock before setting fire to it. My father was broken on the wheel at Cape Haytien, my brother was hung at Rocrou, and I have myself escaped from a sentence to be shot. I have burned three coffee plantations, six indigo plantations, two hundred squares of sugar-cane; I have killed my master, M. Noë, and his mother, ——'

"'Spare us the recital of your services,' said

[1] Officer.

Rigaud, whose assumed mildness concealed a real cruelty, but who was ferocious with decency, and could not endure the impudence of brigandage.

"'I could recount many others,' continued the negro proudly, 'but you will doubtless find these sufficient to merit the rank of *oficial*, and to wear a gold epaulette on my waistcoat, like my comrades there.'

"He pointed to the aides-de-camp and staff officers of Biassou. The generalissimo appeared to reflect a moment, then gravely addressed the negro in these words:

"'I should be delighted to promote you; I am satisfied with your services, but there is one thing more needed. Do you know Latin?'

"The brigand opened his eyes with astonishment as he said: 'If you please, General?'

"'Well, yes,' resumed Biassou quickly, 'do you know Latin?'

"'Latin?' repeated the astounded black.

"'Yes, yes, yes, Latin! do you know Latin?' continued the wily chief. And unfolding a standard, upon which was written the verse of the psalm: *In exitu Israël de Ægypto*, he added: 'Explain to us the meaning of these words.'

"The black, at the height of astonishment, stood stock still, and fumbled mechanically at

the folds of his drawers, while his wild eyes wandered from the flag to the General, and from the General to the flag.

"'Come, will you answer?' said Biassou impatiently.

"The black, after scratching his head, opened and shut his mouth several times, and at length said, with embarrassment: 'I do not know what the General means.'

"The countenance of Biassou assumed a sudden expression of anger and indignation.

"'What, miserable dolt!' exclaimed he, "what! you would be an officer, and you do not know Latin!'

"'But, General,' stammered out the negro, confused and trembling.

"'Silence!' interrupted Biassou, whose wrath seemed to increase. 'I do not know what prevents me from having you shot upon the spot for your presumption. Do you understand, Rigaud, this fine officer who does not even know Latin?'

"'Well, fool! since you do not comprehend what is written on this flag, I will explain it to you; *In exitu*, all soldiers, *Israël*, who do not understand Latin, *de Ægypto*, cannot be made officers. Is it not so, Mr. Chaplain?'

"The little obi made an affirmative sign. Biassou continued:

"'This brother, whom I have appointed executioner to the army, and of whom you are jealous, knows Latin.'

"He turned toward the new executioner, 'Is it not true, friend? Prove to this blockhead that you know more than he. *Dominus vobiscum?*'

"The unhappy sang-mêlé planter, startled from his gloomy reverie by this dreaded voice, raised his head; and although his mind was still bewildered by the base assassination he had committed, terror determined obedience. There was something strange in the manner in which this man sought, among his thoughts of fear and remorse, to pick up some college reminiscences, and in the doleful accent with which he pronounced the childish explanation: '*Dominus vobiscum*—that means, "May the Lord be with you!"'

"'*Et cum spiritu tuo!*' added the mysterious obi solemnly. '*Amen,*' said Biassou. Then resuming his irritated tone, and using in his pretended anger some phrases of bad Latin, in the manner of Sganarelle, to convince the blacks of the knowledge of their chief: 'Return to the lowest place in your rank!' he cried out to the

ambitious negro —'*Sursum corda!* never pretend in future to aspire to the rank of your leaders, who know Latin, *orate, fratres,* or I will hang you! *Bonus, bona, bonum!*'

"The negro, both wondering and terrified, returned to his rank, hanging his head in shame, amid the hoots of all his comrades, who, indignant at such ill-founded pretensions, raised their eyes in admiration to their learned generalissimo. There was something burlesque in this scene, which yet inspired me with a high idea of the ability of Biassou: the ridiculous means which he had just employed with so great success[1] in disconcerting the ambition of a band of rebels, which is always exacting in its demands, furnished me at the same time a measure of the stupidity of the negroes and the address of their chief.

[1] Toussaint Louverture afterward employed the same expedient with similar success.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"MEANWHILE the hour of Biassou's *almuerzo*[1] had arrived. There was brought to the *mariscal de campo de su majestad católica*, a huge turtle-shell in which a sort of olla podrida was smoking, abundantly garnished with slices of bacon, with turtle flesh for the *carnero*,[2] and potatoes for the *garganzas*.[3] A large cabbage floated upon the surface of this *puchero*. On either side of the shell, which served in the double capacity of stew-pot and tureen, were cocoa-nut cups filled with dried raisins, *sandias*,[4] bananas and figs: it was the *postra*.[5] A loaf of corn-bread, a leathern bottle of wine, well pitched, completed the apparatus of the feast. Biassou took a few cloves of garlic from his pocket, and rubbed them over the bread; and then, without even ordering the corpse, which was still warm and palpitating before his eyes, to be removed, he began to eat, and invited Rigaud to do the same. Biassou's appetite was terrible.

[1] Breakfast. [2] Lamb. [3] Chick-pease. [4] Water-melons. [5] Dessert.

"The obi shared not in the meal. I supposed that in common with the kin of his profession he never ate in public, in order to make the blacks believe he was of some supernatural essence and that he lived without nourishment.

"While he was still breakfasting Biassou gave orders to an aide-de-camp for the review to commence, and the various bands began to file off in good order before the grotto. The blacks of the Morne-Rouge first passed by; in number they were about four thousand, divided into small solid platoons, led by chiefs, equipped, as I have already said, in scarlet drawers or sashes. These blacks, most of them tall and powerful, bore muskets, hatchets and sabres; a large number of them had bows and arrows, or long javelins, which they had made in default of other arms. They carried no standard, and marched in silence with an appearance of dismay.

"On observing this horde file off Biassou turned to Rigaud and whispered in his ear in French: 'When will Blanchelande and De Rouvray's grape rid me of these bandits of the Morne-Rouge. I hate them; they are almost all Congoes! And then they know how to kill only in battle; they follow the example of their imbecile chief, their idol Bug-Jargal, the young fool who

is eager to display generosity and magnanimity. You do not know him, I think, Rigaud? You will never know him, I hope. The whites have taken him prisoner; they will rid me of him, as they have already rid me of Bouckmann.'

"'Apropos of Bouckmann,' replied Rigaud, 'here are the black maroons of Macaya passing, and I notice in their ranks the negro whom Jean François dispatched to you announcing the death of Bouckmann. Know you that this man might destroy all the effect of the obi's prophecies concerning the fate of that chief, should he say that he was detained for a half hour at the advanced post, and that he intrusted his news to me before you summoned him to your presence?'

"'Diabolo,' said Biassou, 'you are right, my dear friend, we must stop this fellow's mouth. Wait a moment.'

"Then raising his voice: 'Macaya!' he cried.

"The chief of the maroon negroes approached and presented his blunderbuss in token of respect. 'Send me from your ranks the black whom I see yonder, and who should not be there.'

"It was the messenger of Jean François. Macaya led him to the generalissimo, whose coun-

tenance suddenly assumed that expression of rage he was so expert in feigning.

"'Who are you?' demanded he of the doomed negro.

"'General, I am a black.'

"'*Caramba!* I see that plain enough. But what is your name?'

"'My nickname is Vavelan. My patron among the blessed is St. Sabas, deacon and martyr, whose festival comes the twentieth day before the Nativity of our Lord.'

"Biassou interrupted him.

"'How dare you present yourself on parade in the midst of the glittering muskets and white belts, your sabre without a scabbard, your drawers torn, and your feet covered with mud?'

"'General,' replied the black, 'it is not my fault. I was charged by the Grand Admiral Jean François to bring you the news of the death of the chief of the English maroons, Bouckmann; and if my clothes are torn and my feet dirty, it is because I ran myself out of breath to bring you the news as soon as possible; but they detained me in the camp, and ——'

"Biassou frowned.

"'I am not talking about that, *gavacho!* but of your impudence in appearing in the review in

such a plight. Commend your soul to St. Sabas, deacon and martyr, your patron saint. Go and get yourself shot.'

"Here I had another proof of the moral power of Biassou over the rebels. The unfortunate wretch ordered to go and get himself executed uttered not a murmur; he bowed his head, crossed his arms upon his breast, thrice saluted his pitiless judge, and after kneeling before the obi, who gravely bestowed on him a summary absolution, left the grotto. A few minutes afterward a discharge of musketry announced to Biassou that the negro had obeyed, and was no more.

"The chief, freed from all embarrassment, turned toward Rigaud, his eyes sparkling with pleasure, in a giggle of triumph, which seemed to say, 'Admire!'[1]

[1] Toussaint Louverture, who was formed in the school of Biassou, and who if not his superior in ability, was at least very far from being his equal in perfidy and cruelty, Toussaint Louverture afterward exhibited the spectacle of the same power over the fanatical negroes. This chief, descended as it is said from a royal African family, had like Biassou received some rude instruction, to which he added the gifts of genius. He was erecting a sort of republican throne in San Domingo, at the same time that Bonaparte in France was founding a monarchy upon victory. Toussaint was an artless admirer of the First Consul; but the First Consul, looking upon Toussaint only as a troublesome parodist of his own fortunes, repulsed with disdain every attempt at correspondence on the part of the enfranchised slave who dared to write to him: "The first of the blacks to the first of the whites."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"MEANWHILE the review proceeded. This army, the disorder of which a few hours before had presented so extraordinary a spectacle to my sight, was no less singular when under arms. There were negroes entirely naked, armed with tomahawks and clubs, marching to the sound of a goat's horn like savages; then there were battalions of mulattoes, equipped in the Spanish or English manner, well armed and under excellent discipline, keeping step to the roll of a drum; then came hordes of negresses and little negroes, loaded with forks and spits; fatras bending beneath old muskets without lock or barrel; Griotes with their variegated ornaments, and their men, hideous with grimace and contortion, singing incoherent airs upon guitars, tamtams and balafos. This singular procession was from time to time varied by heterogeneous detachments of griffes, marabouts, sacatras, mamelouks, quadroons, and free sang-mêlés; or again, by nomad hordes of maroon blacks, with haughty

bearing and gleaming carbines, dragging along in their ranks their loaded carts, or now and then a cannon, taken from the whites, which was of less use to them as an arm than as a trophy, and howling at the top of their voices the camp songs of the Grand Pré and of Wa Nassé.

"Above this sea of heads floated banners of every color and device, white, red, tri-colored and fleur-de-lised, surmounted by the liberty-cap, bearing these inscriptions: '*Death to the Priests and Aristocrats!*' '*Long live Religion!*' '*Liberty, Equality!*' '*Long live the King!*' '*Down with the Metropolis!*' '*Viva España!*' '*Down with the Tyrants!*' &c. This striking confusion indicated that all the rebel forces were but a mass of aimless material, and that in this army there was no less disorder in ideas than among the men.

"As they defiled one after another in front of the grotto, the bands inclined their banners, and Biassou returned the salutation. To each troop he addressed a reprimand or eulogy; and every word that escaped his lips, whether of severity or flattery, was received by his followers with a fanatical reverence and a species of superstitious fear.

"This flood of barbarians and savages ceased

at length. I confess that the sight of so many brigands, which at first diverted me, finally became depressing. However, day was declining, and just as the last rank defiled, the sinking sun threw only a copper tint upon the granite brows of the mountains in the east.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"Biassou seemed to be in a study. When the review was ended, when he had given his last orders and all the rebels had returned beneath their ajoupas, he addressed me:

"'Young man,' said he, 'you have been able at your leisure to judge of my genius and power. The time is now come for you to give an account of it to Léogri.'

"'It was no fault of mine that it did not come sooner,' replied I coldly.

"'You are right,' answered Biassou. He hesitated a moment as if to consider the effect which would be produced upon me by what he was about to say, and then added: 'But it depends on yourself whether it ever comes.'

"'How?' cried I, in astonishment, 'What do you mean?'

"'Yes,' continued Biassou, 'your life depends on yourself; you can save it if you choose.'

"This fit of clemency, the first and doubtless the last which Biassou ever experienced,

seemed a miracle to me. The obi, no less surprised than myself, started up from the seat upon which he had for a long time been preserving the same fixed attitude of ecstacy, after the fashion of the Hindoo fakirs. Placing himself in front of the generalissimo, he raised his voice angrily:

"'*Que dice el exelentisimo señor mariscal de campo?*[1] Does he not recollect his promise? Neither he nor the Bon Giu can now dispose of this life; it belongs to me.'

"At that moment I again thought I recognized this accursed little man; but the time was inopportune, and the light did not then burst upon me.

"Without exhibiting the slightest discomposure Biassou arose, spoke to the obi for a moment in a low tone, showed him the black flag I had already observed, and after exchanging a few words, the sorcerer nodded assent. Each resumed his former seat and attitude.

"'Listen,' said the generalissimo to me, producing from his vest pocket the second dispatch of Jean François: 'our affairs are in a bad way; Bouckmann has perished in battle. The whites have exterminated two thousand revolted blacks

[1] What does the most excellent Lord Field Marshal say?

in the district of the Cul-de-sac. The colonists are pushing their fortifications and the plain is bristling with military posts. By our own fault we have lost the opportunity of taking the Cape; it will not return again these many days. In the east the principal road is intercepted by a river; the whites, to prevent its passage, have established upon it a battery on pontoons, and upon each bank have formed two small camps. On the south there is a highway which crosses the mountainous region called the Haut-du-Cap; they have covered it with troops and artillery. Their position on the land side is equally well fortified by a good palisade, upon which all the inhabitants have been laboring, and they have added to it chevaux-de-frise. Cape Haytien, therefore, is closed against our arms. Our ambuscade at Dompte-Mulâtre has failed. To all these disasters is added the Siam fever, which is depopulating the camp of Jean François. In consideration of these facts the grand admiral of France[1] thinks — and we coincide in his opinion — that it is best to treat with Governor Blanchelande and the Colonial Assembly. Here is the letter we have addressed to the Assembly upon this subject: listen!

[1] We have already stated that Jean François assumed this title.

"'Messrs. Deputies:

"'Serious evils have afflicted this rich and important colony: we have been involved in them, and this is all we have to say in our justification. You will one day render us all the justice our position merits. We deserve to be comprised within the general amnesty which King Louis XVI. has granted to all indiscriminately.

"'If not, as the King of Spain is a good King, treats us well, and *witnesses us by rewards*, we shall continue to serve him with zeal and devotion.

"'By the law of September 28th, 1791, we perceive the National Assembly and the King give you the power finally to determine the condition of persons not free, and the political rights of the people of color.

"'We shall uphold the decrees of the National Assembly as well as your own, clad with the requisite formalities, to the last drop of our blood. It would be a matter of interest for you to declare, by a formal proclamation of the General, that it is your intention to consider the condition of the slaves. Knowing that they are the object of your solicitude, they will, through their leaders, to whom you will send this proclamation, be satisfied, and the interrupted equilibrium will in a short time be restored.

"'Do not, however, imagine, Messrs. Representatives, that we will consent to take up arms in support of revolutionary Assemblies.

"'We are the subjects of three Kings: the King of Congo, the hereditary lord of all the blacks; the King of France, who represents our fathers; and the King of Spain, who represents our mothers. These three kings are the descendants of those who, led by a star, went to adore the Man-God. If we served the Assemblies we should, perhaps, be compelled to bear arms against our brethren, the subjects of these three Kings, to whom we have promised fidelity.

"'And, moreover, ignorant as we are of what is meant

by the will of the nation, seeing that, *since the world reigns*, we have executed the will of the King only.

"'The Prince of France loves us, and that of Spain continually succors us. We aid them; they aid us; it is the cause of humanity. Besides, should these majesties fail us, we would very soon have *throned a King.*

"'Such are our intentions, pending which we will consent to make peace.[1]

"'*Signed:*

"'JEAN FRANÇOIS, General.
BIASSOU, Field Marshal.
DESPREZ, MANZEAU, TOUSSAINT, AUBERT, Commissioners *ad hoc.*'

"'You perceive,' added Biassou, after the reading of this specimen of negro diplomacy, the remembrance of which is fixed word for word in my mind, 'You perceive, we are pacific.

"'Now, this is what I want of you. Neither Jean François nor myself have been educated in the schools of the whites, where you are taught fine language. We know how to fight, but we do not know how to write.

"'Meantime we are anxious that in our letter to the Assembly there shall be nothing that might excite the haughty *burlerias* of our old masters. You appear to have learned that frivolous science, of which we are ignorant. Correct

[1] This letter, ridiculously characteristic as it is, was actually sent to the Assembly.

the faults in our dispatch which might excite the laughter of the whites; at this price I grant you your life.'

"There was something in this office of corrector of errors in the diplomatic orthography of Biassou so repugnant to my pride that I did not hesitate a moment. And, moreover, what had I to live for? I refused his offer.

"He seemed surprised. 'What!' he cried, 'would you die rather than correct a few strokes of the pen upon a scrap of parchment?'

"'Yes,' I replied.

"My resolution seemed to embarrass him. After a moment of thought he turned to me and said:

"'Listen, young fool; I am less obstinate than you. I give you till to-morrow evening to decide upon obeying me; to-morrow, at the setting of the sun, you shall be brought before me again. Resolve then to gratify me. Adieu; night gives good counsel. Think well of this, that in our hands death is not simply death.'

"The import of these closing words, accompanied by a hideous laugh, was unequivocal; and the torments which Biassou was accustomed to invent for his victims completed the explanation.

"'Candi, remove the prisoner,' continued Bias-

sou; 'confide him to a guard of the blacks of the Morne-Rouge; it is my pleasure that he live for one more course of the sun, and my other soldiers would not, perhaps, have the patience to wait for twenty-four hours.'

"The mulatto Candi, who was the chief of his guard, bound my arms behind my back. A private took the end of the rope and we left the grotto.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"When extraordinary events, suffering and catastrophe suddenly break upon the midst of a life which has always been happy and delightful, these startling emotions, these shocks of fate abruptly terminate the slumber of the soul which was reposing in the monotony of prosperity. Misfortune, however, when it comes in this way, seems not to be an awakening but only a dream. Upon the man who has always been happy despair begins by stupor. Unforeseen adversity resembles the torpedo; it agitates, but it benumbs, and the fearful light which it suddenly flashes across our vision is not the light of day. Men, things, deeds, then pass before us, in some respects, like a phantasmagoria, and move as in a dream. The atmosphere, the perspective, everything in the horizon of our life is changed; but a long time elapses before our eyes have lost that kind of luminous image of happiness past which remains in them, and which, incessantly interposing itself between them and the sombre pres-

ent, changes its color, and gives to the reality an inexplicable falsity. Then everything that is, appears to us impossible and absurd; we scarcely believe in our own existence, because, finding nothing about us of what composes our being, we do not understand how it all could have disappeared without dragging us in its wake, and why of our lives nothing remains but ourselves. When such a violent condition of the soul is prolonged, it upsets the equilibrium of the mind, and becomes madness; a state, perhaps, of happiness, in which life is to the unfortunate nothing but a vision of which he himself is the phantom.

CHAPTER XL.

"I KNOW not, gentlemen, why I lay these ideas before you. They are not such as one can comprehend, or be made to comprehend. You must have felt them. I have experienced them. That was the state of my soul when Biassou's guard handed me over to the negroes of the Morne-Rouge. It seemed to me that spectres were delivering me up to spectres, and without offering resistance I suffered them to bind me by the waist to the trunk of a tree. They brought me some boiled potatoes, which I ate with that kind of mechanical instinct which the goodness of God leaves to man even when his mind is most preoccupied.

"Meantime night had come on; my guards retired to their ajoupas, only six of them remaining near me, seated or lying before a large fire, which they had kindled for protection against the nocturnal cold. In a few moments all were in deep sleep.

"The physical exhaustion of my frame con-

tributed not a little to the vague reveries which disturbed my thoughts. I recalled the days serene and ever the same which only a few weeks previous I had passed at the side of Marie, without a glimpse in the future of any other possibility than that of our endless happiness. I compared those days with the day which had just passed; a day in which so many strange things had been performed before me, as if to make me doubt their existence,—when I had been thrice condemned to die and was not saved. I thought of the future before me, which would be but a single day, and which offered no other certainty than that of misery and death, happily at hand. It seemed as if I was struggling with some hideous nightmare. I asked myself if it were possible that what had passed had passed, that what surrounded me was the camp of the sanguinary Biassou, that Marie was forever lost to me, and that this prisoner, guarded by six barbarians, bound with cords, and devoted to certain death, that this prisoner whom the blaze of a brigand's fire discovered to me, was really myself? And notwithstanding all my efforts to escape obsession by a thought which was far more distracting, still my mind reverted to Marie. With anguish I questioned myself as to

her fate; I struggled with my cords as if to fly to her rescue, constantly hoping that the terrible dream would vanish, and that God had not decreed to make all these horrors, on which I dared not dwell, enter into the destiny of the angel whom he had given me to wife. The gloomy association of my ideas then recalled Pierrot to my memory, and rage rendered me almost insensible; the arteries of my forehead seemed ready to burst; I hated myself; I cursed myself; I despised myself that I had for one moment associated my friendship for Pierrot with my love for Marie, and without seeking to explain what motive could have led him to throw himself into the waters of the Grande Riviere, I wept because I had not killed him. He was dead, I soon to die, and the only thing that I regretted in his life and mine, was my loss of vengeance.

"All these emotions agitated me in the midst of the half sleep into which my exhaustion had thrown me. How long it continued I cannot tell; but I was suddenly startled from it by the echo of a manly voice, which was singing distinctly, though at a distance: '*Yo que soy contrabandista.*'

"I opened my eyes with a shudder, all was

dark about me, the negroes were asleep, and the fire was dying. I heard no more; I thought that this voice was an illusion of sleep, and my heavy eyelids closed again. I soon opened them a second time suddenly; the voice had recommenced, and was singing sadly and at a less distance this stanza of a Spanish romance:

"'En los campos de Ocaña
Prisionero caí;
Me llevan á Cotadilla;
Desdichado fuí.'[1]

"This time it was certainly no dream. It was Pierrot's voice. A moment afterward it rose again in the darkness and silence, and I heard for the second time, almost in my ear, the well known refrain, *Yo que soy contrabandista.* A dog came bounding joyously to my feet; it was Rask. I raised my eyes. A black stood before me, and the glow of the dying embers cast by the side of the dog his colossal shadow; it was Pierrot. I was transported with vengeance; surprise rendered me motionless and dumb. I slept no more. Had then the dead arisen! It was not a dream; it was an apparition. I turned

[1] In the fields of Ocaña
A prisoner I fell;
They bore me to Cotadilla;
Unfortunate was I!

away in horror. When he saw this his head fell upon his breast.

"'Brother,' murmured he in a low voice, 'you promised me never to distrust me when you heard me sing that song; brother have you forgotten your promise?'

"Anger loosed my tongue.

"'Monster!' I cried, 'I have found you then at last, butcher, assassin of my uncle, ravisher of my Marie! Dare you call me brother? Away! approach me not.'

"I forgot that I was bound so that I could scarcely move at all. Involuntarily I turned my eyes to my side to find my sword. The motion struck him. He seemed excited but tender.

"'No,' said he, 'no, I will not approach you. You are wretched, I pity you; you have no pity for me, though I am more so than you.'

"I shrugged my shoulders. He understood the silent reproach. He gazed at me in a sort of revery.

"'Yes, you have lost much; but believe me I have lost more than yourself.'

"Meantime the sound of voices had awakened the six negroes who were guarding me. Observing a stranger they hastily started up and seized their arms; but as soon as their eyes fell upon

Pierrot they raised a shout of surprise and joy, and fell prostrate, striking their foreheads against the ground.

"But the reverence which these negroes rendered to Pierrot, the caresses which Rask offered alternately to his master and myself, looking at me with some disquietude as if astonished at my cold demeanor, nothing made any impression upon me at that moment; I was entirely absorbed in my emotion of rage, rendered powerless by the cords that bound me.

"'Oh!' cried I at length, weeping with fury at the shackles that fettered my movements, 'oh, how wretched I am! I was regretting that this wretch had executed the sentence of justice upon himself; I thought him dead, and I was bemoaning the loss of my vengeance. And now here he has come to mock me; there he is, alive before my eyes, and I cannot enjoy the pleasure of stabbing him. Oh, who will deliver me from these execrable fetters?'

"Pierrot turned toward the negroes, who were still in adoration before him.

"'Comrades,' said he, 'unbind the prisoner.'

CHAPTER XLI.

"He was promptly obeyed. My six guards eagerly cut the cords which encircled me. I stood erect and free, but did not move; astonishment enchained me in its turn.

"'This is not all,' added Pierrot. And he snatched a dagger from one of the negroes and presented it to me with these words: 'You can take your satisfaction. God forbid that I dispute with you the right to dispose of my life. Three times have you saved it; it belongs to you, indeed; strike, if you wish to strike.' There was neither reproach nor bitterness in his tone. He was only sad and resigned.

"This way unexpectedly opened to my revenge by the very man I burned to strike, was too strange and too easy, and I felt that all my hatred of Pierrot, all my love for Marie were not sufficient to make me an assassin; besides, however appearances might be, a voice was crying out from the depths of my heart, that an enemy and a guilty wretch never in this

way anticipates vengeance and punishment. In short, must I acknowledge it, there was in the imperious prestige with which this singular being was surrounded, something which in spite of myself made me at the moment yield to its influence. I thrust away the dagger.

"'Wretch,' I exclaimed, 'I would slay you in combat, not as an assassin. Defend yourself!'

"'Defend myself?' replied he, in surprise. 'Against whom?'

"'Against me.' He seemed astounded.

"'Against you! That is the only thing in which I cannot obey you. Do you see Rask? I could cut his throat; he would not resist; but I could not force him to struggle against me; he would not understand that. I do not understand you, I am Rask to you.'

"After a short silence he added:

"'I see hatred in your eyes, as you one day might have seen it in mine. I know you have experienced many misfortunes, your uncle has been massacred, your fields burned, your friends butchered; they have sacked your houses, and devastated your heritage; but it was not I, it was mine. Listen; I told you one day that yours had done me much ill; you answered that it was not you. What did I do then?

"His countenance brightened up; he expected to see me fall into his arms. I looked at him savagely.

"'You disavow all that yours have done to me,' replied I, in accents of fury, 'and you say nothing of what you have done to me yourself.'

"'What is it then?' he asked.

"I approached him menacingly, and my voice became like thunder:

"'Where is Marie? What have you done with Marie?'

"At that name a cloud overspread his brow; for a moment he appeared embarrassed. At length, breaking the silence, he answered:

"'*Maria!* Yes, you are right—but there are too many listeners here.'

"His embarassment, these words, '*you are right*,' kindled a flame of hell in my heart. I thought I saw that he evaded my question. At that moment he looked at me with his ingenious face, and said with deep emotion:

"'Do not suspect me, I conjure you. I will tell you all elsewhere. Come, love me, as I love you, with confidence.'

"He hesitated a moment to observe the effect of his words, and added in a gentle tone:

"'Can I call you brother?'

"But my jealous rage had resumed all its violence, and those tender words, which seemed to me hypocritical, did but exasperate it.

"'Dare you remind me of those days, miserable ingrate?'

"He interrupted me. Big tears were in his eyes:

"'It is not I who am the ingrate.'

"'Speak, then,' cried I, with emotion. 'What have you done with Marie?'

"'Elsewhere, elsewhere,' he answered. Here there are listeners. Moreover, probably you would not believe me merely upon my word, and time presses. See, day breaks, and I must take you away. Listen, all is over since you distrust me, and you may as well finish me with a dagger; but wait a moment longer, before you execute what you call your vengeance; I must first deliver you. Come with me to Biassou.'

"This manner both of speech and action concealed a mystery I could not then comprehend. Notwithstanding all my prejudices against the man, his voice always touched my heart. As I listened a mysterious power mastered me. I was surprised to find myself hesitating between vengeance and pity, distrust and implicit confidence. I followed him.

CHAPTER XLII.

"We left the quarter of the negroes of the Morne-Rouge. I was surprised to find myself moving free through this barbarous camp, where the night before each brigand seemed to be thirsting for my blood. Far from seeking to stop us, blacks and mulattoes prostrated themselves along our path with acclamations of surprise, joy and reverence. I knew not what rank Pierrot held in the army of the rebels; but I recalled to mind the sway which he exercised over his companions in slavery, and without difficulty I explained the authority which he seemed to enjoy among his comrades in rebellion.

"Reaching the line of guards posted before the grotto of Biassou, the mulatto Candi, their chief, advanced toward us, and with menaces demanded of us, while yet at a distance, how we dared come so near the General; but as soon as he was near enough to see distinctly the features of Pierrot, he suddenly removed his

gold-broidered montera, and, as if terrified at his own audacity, he bowed to the ground and took us in to Biassou, stammering a thousand excuses, to which Pierrot responded only by a gesture of disdain.

"The respect of the private soldiers for Pierrot had not astonished me, but upon observing Candi, one of their principal officers, humbling himself thus before my uncle's slave, I began to ask myself what this man could be whose authority seemed so great. It was however quite another thing when I saw the generalissimo, who was alone at the moment we entered, quietly taking a calalou, suddenly start up at the appearance of Pierrot, and dissembling an uneasy surprise and violent anger beneath the externals of profound respect, humbly bend before my companion, and offer him his own mahogany throne. Pierrot refused the seat.

"'Jean Biassou,' said he, 'I am not come to take your place, but simply to beg a favor.'

"'*Alteza*,' replied Biassou, renewing his salutations, 'you know that you can dispose of all that depends on Jean Biassou, of all that belongs to Jean Biassou, and of Jean Biassou himself.'

"The title of *alteza*, which is equivalent to

that of our Highness or Majesty, given to Pierrot by Biassou, increased my astonishment still more.

"'I do not wish so much,' continued Pierrot quickly; 'I ask of you only the life and liberty of this prisoner.'

"He pointed to me. Biassou seemed for a moment to be struck dumb; his embarrassment was short.

"'You desolate your servant, *Alteza;* you exact of him more than he can give you, to his great regret. The prisoner is not Jean Biassou's, does not belong to Jean Biassou, and does not depend on Jean Biassou.'

"'What do you mean?' demanded Pierrot, with an air of severity. 'On whom then does he depend? Is there any other power than you here?'

"'Alas, yes, *Alteza.*'

"'What is it?'

"'My army.'

"The wily and caressing way with which Biassou evaded the proud and frank questions of Pierrot, told that he was determined to yield to him nothing more than he seemed to be compelled to.

"'What,' cried Pierrot, 'your army? And do you not command it?'

"Biassou, preserving his advantage without however departing from his attitude of inferiority, replied with an appearance of sincerity.

"'*Su Alteza,* think you we can really command men who have revolted only to escape obedience?'

"I attached too little value to life to interrupt the silence; but what I had seen at night of the unlimited authority of Biassou over those bands, might have furnished me with evidence enough to refute him and expose his duplicity. Pierrot replied:

"'Well, if you cannot command your army, and if your soldiers are your chiefs, what motives of hatred can they have against this prisoner?'

"'Bouckmann has been murdered by the government troops,' said Biassou, giving his ferocious and railing countenance an appearance of sadness; 'mine have resolved to avenge upon this white the death of the chief of the maroon negroes of Jamaica; they burn to oppose trophy to trophy, and to make the head of this young officer serve as a counterpoise to the head of Bouckmann in that balance in which the *bon Giu* weighs the two parties.'

"'How can you,' said Pierrot, 'adhere to

this system of retaliation? Listen to me, Jean Biassou; these cruelties are what will ruin our just cause. A prisoner in the camp of the whites, from which I have just succeeded in escaping, I was ignorant of the death of Bouckmann until you apprised me. It is a just punishment from Heaven for his crimes. I will inform you of another piece of news. Jeannot, the same chief of the blacks who served as guide to the whites to draw them into the ambuscade of Dompte-Mulâtre, Jeannot is also dead. You know—do not interrupt me, Biassou—that in atrocity he rivaled Bouckmann and yourself. Now, mark this: it was not a thunderbolt, it was not the whites, who struck him down; it was Jean François himself who performed that act of justice.'

"Biassou, who had listened with a sullen respect, uttered an exclamation of surprise. At that moment Rigaud entered, bowed low to Pierrot, and whispered in the ear of the generalissimo. From the camp without a tumultuous commotion was heard. Pierrot continued:

"'Yes; Jean François, who has no fault but his unfortunate love of luxury, and the ridiculous display of that carriage and six which takes him every day from his camp to the mass of

the curé of the Grande Riviere, Jean François has punished the cowardly fury of Jeannot. Notwithstanding the prayers of the brigand, although at his last moment he clung to the curé of the Marmelade, his spiritual minister, with such intense fright that he had to be separated by force, the monster was shot yesterday at the foot of the very tree, armed with iron hooks, on which he hung his living victims. Biassou, think of this example. Why all these massacres which drive the whites to ferocity? Why still employ juggleries for the purpose of exciting the fury of our unhappy comrades, already too intensely inflamed? There is at the Trou Coffi a mulatto charlatan called Romaine the Prophetess, who is making a band of blacks so many fanatics; he profanes the holy mass; he makes them believe that he is in communication with the Virgin, whose oracles he professes to hear by putting his head in the tabernacle; and he is urging his comrades to murder and pillage in the name of Marie!'

"There was perhaps an expression more tender than that of religious veneration in the manner in which Pierrot pronounced this word. I know not how it was, but it was offensive and irritating to my feelings.

"'Well,' continued the slave, 'you have in your camp some mysterious obi, some unknown juggler, like this Romaine the Prophetess! I am not ignorant, that in having to conduct an army composed of men of all countries, all families and all colors, you need some common bond; but could you not find it elsewhere than in a ferocious fanaticism and in ridiculous superstitions? Believe me, Biassou, the whites are less cruel than we. I have seen many planters defend the lives of their slaves; I am aware that with many of them it was not to save the life of a man, but a sum of money; yet at least their interests lent them a virtue. Let us not be found less clement than they; besides it is our interest. Will our cause be more sacred and just when we have exterminated women, butchered children, tortured old men, and burned planters in their own houses? And yet these are our every-day exploits. Answer me, Biassou, must the only vestiges of our passage forever be traces of blood or of fire?'

"He ceased. The radiance of his look and the tone of his voice gave to his words a force of conviction and authority it is impossible to reproduce. Like a fox taken by a lion, Biassou's eye obliquely cast down, seemed to be seeking

by what trick he might escape from such mighty power. While he was still meditating, the leader of the band from Aux Cayes, this same Rigaud, who, on the previous morning had gazed so coolly upon so many horrors committed before his eyes, seemed to grow indignant at the crimes which Pierrot had pictured, and exclaimed with hypocritical consternation—'Ah, good God, what is a nation run mad!'

CHAPTER XLIII.

"MEANWHILE the tumult without was increasing, and it appeared to render Biassou uneasy. I afterward learned that this tumult came from the negroes of the Morne-Rouge, who were running through the camp announcing the return of my liberator, and expressing their determination to second him whatever might be the motive of his visit to Biassou. Rigaud entered to inform the generalissimo of this; and it was the fear of a lamentable schism which determined the artful leader to some degree of concession to the desires of Pierrot.

"'*Alteza*,' he exclaimed, with an air of petulance, 'if we are severe upon the whites, you are certainly severe upon us. You were wrong in accusing me of the violence of the torrent; it carries me along. But in fact *¿qué podria hacer ahora*,[1] which would please you.'

"'I have already told you, *Señor* Biassou,' replied Pierrot; 'let me take away this prisoner.'

[1] What could I do now?

"Biassou remained for a moment in thought, and then exclaimed, giving to the expression of his features all the frankness of which they were capable:

"'Come then, *alteza*, I will prove to you how great my desire is to please you. Only permit me to speak two words in private with the prisoner; he shall then be free to follow you.'

"'Certainly, nothing forbids it,' replied Pierrot. And his countenance, hitherto proud and restless, grew radiant with joy. He retired a few steps.

"Biassou drew me to a corner of the grotto, and said to me in a whisper:

"'I can yield you your life only upon one condition; you know it; do you consent?'

"He showed me the dispatch of Jean François. Consent would have seemed to me a stain upon my honor.

"'Never,' I replied.

"'Ah,' exclaimed he, with his giggle. 'Still so decided! You count much then upon your protector. Do you know who he is?'

"'Yes,' I replied with vehemence; 'a monster like yourself, only a still greater hypocrite.'

"He started back in amazement, seeking to divine from the expression of my eyes whether my words were serious.

"'What?' said he. 'You do not, then, know him?'

"'I recognize in him,' I answered disdainfully, 'only a slave of my uncle, named Pierrot.'

"Biassou renewed his giggle.

"'Ha! ha! That is singular. He claims your life and liberty, and you call him a "monster like myself."'

"'What do I care,' replied I. 'If I should gain a moment's liberty, it would not be to ask him for my life, but for his own.'

"'What is that?' said Biassou. 'Yet you appear to speak as you think, and I cannot suppose you feel inclined to trifle with your own life. There is something under this which I cannot comprehend. You are protected by a man you hate; he pleads for your life, and you are seeking his death! Well, well; it is all one to me. You ask for a moment's liberty; that is all I can grant you; I give you liberty to follow him; only first give me your word of honor you will return and place yourself in my hands again two hours before sunset. You are a Frenchman, are you not?'

"Need I confess it, gentlemen? Life was a burden to me; besides, I disdained to receive it at the hands of that Pierrot whom so many

It was all over with me, when I felt that I was seized from behind—Page 298.

circumstances pointed out to my hatred; I know not whether the certainty that Biassou, who never gave up his prey easily, would never consent to my deliverance, did not also enter into my resolution; I really desired but a few hours of liberty before death, in order to inform my friends of the fate of my beloved Marie, and my own. The pledge which Biassou, trusting to French honor, demanded from me, was a sure and ready means of obtaining yet one day more; I gave it.

"After having bound me in this way, the chief again approached Pierrot.

"'*Alteza*,' said he, in an obsequious tone, 'the white prisoner is at your command; you can take him away, he is free to accompany you.'

"Never before had I seen so much happiness in the eyes of Pierrot.

"'Thanks, Biassou!' he exclaimed, extending his hand, 'thanks. You have rendered me a service which henceforth gives you the power to exact anything of me. Continue to dispose of my brethren of the Morne-Rouge until my return.'

"He turned toward me. 'Now that you are free,' said he, 'come.' And he drew me along after him with a singular energy.

"Biassou watched us as we retired with an air of amazement, which was apparent even beneath those demonstrations of respect with which he accompanied the departure of my companion.

CHAPTER XLIV.

"I was impatient to be alone with Pierrot. His discomposure when I had questioned him upon the fate of Marie, and the insolent tenderness with which he dared to pronounce her name, had still more deeply inrooted the feelings of execration and jealousy, which sprang up in my heart the moment I saw him carry away through the conflagration of Fort Galifet her whom I could hardly call my wife. What cared I after that for all the generous reproaches he had addressed in my presence to the sanguinary Biassou, his solicitude exercised for my life, or even the extraordinary impress which marked all his words and his actions? What cared I for the mystery which seemed to envelop him; which re-produced him alive before my eyes, when I thought I had witnessed his death; which showed him to me a prisoner in the hands of the whites, when I had seen him buried in the Grande Riviere; which transformed the slave into an *alteza*, the prisoner

into a liberator? Of all these incomprehensible things, the only one that was clear to my eyes was the odious ravishment of Marie, an outrage to avenge, a crime to punish. The strange scenes which had already passed before my eyes hardly sufficed to make me suspend my judgment, and I awaited with impatience the moment when I could compel my rival to explain. That time came at last.

"We had crossed the triple lines of blacks, who prostrated themselves as we passed, exclaiming in their surprise: *Miraculo! ya no esta prisionero.*[1] I knew not whether they spoke of myself or Pierrot. We had left behind the last limits of the camp; we had lost from view, behind trees and rocks, Biassou's last sentinels. Rask was joyously leaping along in front, and then returning to us; Pierrot was walking rapidly; I stopped him suddenly.

"'Hear me,' said I, 'it is useless to go further. The listeners you feared listen no longer; speak! what have you done with Marie?'

"I was breathless with concentrated emotion. He looked at me kindly.

"'Forever so?' replied he.

"'Yes, forever,' cried I, in a rage, 'forever. I

[1] A miracle! Already he is no longer a prisoner.

will put that question to you until your last breath, until my last sigh: where is Marie?'

"'Can nothing dissipate your doubts of my fidelity? You shall know soon.'

"'Soon, monster,' I replied. 'It is now that I would know. Where is Marie? Where is Marie? Do you hear? Answer, or exchange your life for mine. Defend yourself.'

"'I have already said,' replied he sadly, 'that cannot be. The torrent never struggles against its source; my life, which you have thrice saved, cannot contend against your life. And were it otherwise, the thing would still be impossible. We have but one dagger between us.'

"So saying, he drew a dagger from his girdle, and presented it to me. 'Take it,' said he.

"I was beside myself. I seized the dagger and planted it against his breast. He did not dream of withdrawing.

"'Wretch,' I exclaimed, 'force me not to become an assassin. I will plunge this blade into your heart unless you this instant tell me where my wife is.'

"'You can do so,' replied he, without anger. 'But with uplifted hands I beseech you leave me one more hour of life, and follow me. You

distrust him who owes you three lives, him whom you called your brother; but listen, if, at the end of an hour you distrust me still, you shall be free to kill me. It will be time enough then. You see, I seek to offer no resistance. I conjure you, by the name even of *Maria* ——' He added, with painful emotion: 'of your wife. One hour more; and if I supplicate you thus, it is not for myself, it is for you.'

"His voice had an ineffable expression of solicitation and of grief. Something seemed to assure me that what he said might be true, that his regard for his life alone would not be enough to give to his voice that penetrating tenderness, that suppliant sweetness, and that he was pleading for something more than himself. I yielded once more to that mysterious ascendency which he exercised over me, and which at that moment I blushed to acknowledge.

"'Proceed,' said I. 'I grant you this respite of an hour. I will follow you.'

"I offered to return him the dagger.

"'No,' replied he, 'keep it; you distrust me. But, come, let us lose no time.'

CHAPTER XLV.

"He began to lead me forward again. Rask, who during our conference had frequently endeavored to go on, and then had returned each time to us, asking us by his looks why we delayed, ran on again joyfully. We were soon buried in a virgin forest. In about half an hour we reached a pretty green meadow, watered by a spring in the living rock, and bordered by the fresh deep fringe of huge primeval trees. A cavern, the grayish front of which was overhung by a multitude of creeping plants, clematis, ivy and jasmine, opened upon the meadow. Rask was about to bark. Pierrot silenced him by a signal, and without uttering a word, drew me along by the hand into the cavern.

"A woman, with her back turned to the light, was seated in this grotto upon a carpet of rushes. At the sound of our steps she turned ——. My friends, it was Marie!

"She was clad in a white dress, as upon the day of our marriage, and still wore in her hair

the wreath of orange flowers, the last virginal ornament of the young wife which my hands had not yet detached from her brow. She perceived me; recognized me; uttered a shriek, and fell into my arms dying with joy and surprise. I was overwhelmed.

"At this cry an aged female, bearing an infant in her arms, ran from a rear chamber, formed by a prolongation of the cavern. It was Marie's nurse, and the youngest child of my poor uncle. Pierrot had gone to bring water from the neighboring spring. He threw a few drops upon Marie's face. Their coolness recalled her to life; she opened her eyes.

"'Leopold,' said she, 'my Leopold!'

"'Marie,' I answered, and the rest of our words culminated in a kiss.

"'At least not before me,' cried a voice, the tone of which was heartrending. We raised our eyes; it was Pierrot. There he stood witnessing our caresses, as if he were put to the torture. His swelling bosom panted, and a cold sweat fell in great drops from his forehead. He trembled in every limb. Suddenly he hid his face in his hands, and fled from the grotto, repeating with a terrible accent, 'Not before me!'

"Marie half raised herself from me, and ex-

claimed, following him with her eyes: 'Good God! Leopold, our love seems to torture him. Can it be that he loves me?'

"The cry of the slave had shown me that he was my rival; Marie's exclamation showed me that he was also my friend.

"'Marie,' replied I, and a wonderful joy entered into my heart at the same time with a pang of unutterable regret, 'Marie, did you not know it?'

"'But, I do not know it yet,' she answered with a chaste blush. 'What! He love me! I never suspected it.'

"I pressed her wildly to my heart.

"'I find my wife and my friend again,' exclaimed I; 'how happy and how guilty I am! I distrusted him.'

"'What?' exclaimed Marie, in astonishment, 'him! Pierrot! Oh yes, you were guilty indeed! Twice have you owed him my life, and perhaps more still,' added she as her eyes fell. 'Without his aid the crocodile at the river would have devoured me; without him the negroes —— It was Pierrot who snatched me from their hands at the very moment when doubtless they would have sent me to join my unhappy father.' She stopped and wept.

"'But why,' asked I, 'did not Pierrot send you to the Cape to your husband?'

"'He endeavored,' said she, 'but he could not. Obliged to guard himself equally against the whites and the blacks, it was very difficult. And then we did not know what had become of you. Some said that they had seen you fall dead, but Pierrot assured me it was not so. I was very certain of the contrary, for some presentiment would have warned me of it, and if you had died I should have died at the same time.'

"'Pierrot, then,' I said, 'brought you here.'

"'Yes, my Leopold; this isolated grotto is known to him alone. With me he also saved all that remained of the family, my good nurse and my little brother; here he concealed us. I assure you it is very comfortable, and if war were not devastating the country, now that we are ruined, I should like to live here with you. Pierrot has supplied all our wants. He came often; he wore a red plume on his head. He consoled me, spoke to me of you, and assured me I should soon be restored to you. But not having seen him for the last three days, I began to be anxious, when he came with you. So this poor friend has been in search of you.'

"'Yes,' I replied.

"'But how can it be, then,' she added, 'that he loves me? Are you sure of it?'

"'I am sure now,' I replied. 'It was he, who upon the point of stabbing me, stayed his arm for fear of afflicting you; it was he who sung you those love-songs in the pavilion by the river.'

"'Truly!' replied Marie, with artless surprise, 'he was your rival! The wicked man of the wild marigolds, our noble Pierrot! I cannot believe it. He has been so humble, so respectful to me, even more than while he was our slave! It is true, he sometimes watched me with a very singular look, but it was one of sadness, and I attributed it to my misfortunes. Oh, could you but know with what passionate devotion he spoke to me of my Leopold! His friendship spoke of you almost like my love.'

"These explanations of Marie were to me at once enchantment and desolation. I remembered with what cruelty I had treated this generous Pierrot, and I felt the full force of his tender and resigned reproach: '*It is not I who am the ingrate!*'

"At this moment Pierrot returned. His face was dark and full of suffering. You would have said he was a man who had just returned from

the rack, but who had triumphed over it. He advanced toward me with slow steps, and said in a grave tone of voice, pointing at the dagger I had placed in my girdle:

"'The hour has passed.'

"'The hour! what hour?' I exclaimed.

"'The hour you granted me; it was necessary that I might conduct you hither. Then I asked you to spare my life; now I conjure you to take it.'

"The sweetest sentiments of the heart, love, friendship and gratitude, combined at this moment to rend my heart. I fell at the feet of the slave unable to utter a word, and sobbed bitterly. He raised me hurriedly.

"'What are you doing?' said he.

"'I am rendering to you the homage I owe you; I am no longer worthy of a friendship like yours. Your gratitude cannot go so far as to pardon my ingratitude.'

"His face still wore an expression of harshness; he seemed to be struggling with violent emotions; he advanced a step toward me, and drew back; he opened his lips and was silent. This was of short duration; he spread out his arms saying:

"'Can I now call you brother?'

"I answered only by throwing myself upon his breast. After a short pause he added:

"'You are kind, but misfortune rendered you unjust.'

"'I have found my brother again, said I; 'I am no longer unhappy, but I am very guilty.'

"'Guilty, brother? I have been more so than you. You are wretched no longer; I shall be so forever.'

CHAPTER XLVI.

"THE joy which the first transports of friendship had lit up over his countenance vanished; his features assumed an expression of singular and intense sadness.

"'Listen,' said he in a frigid tone, 'my father was a king in the country of Kakongo. He administered justice to his subjects before his gate, and at every sentence he pronounced, he drank according to the usage of kings a full cup of palm wine. We lived happy and powerful. The Europeans came; they taught me these useless things which you have noticed. Their chief was a Spanish captain; he promised my father larger countries than his own, and white wives; my father followed him with his family ——. Brother, they sold us!'

"The breast of the black heaved, his eyes flashed; he broke mechanically a young medlar tree standing near; then he continued, without seeming to address me:

"'The master of the country of Kakongo had

a master, and his son bent a slave over the furrows of San Domingo. They separated the young lion from his old father to tame them more easily. They tore the young wife from her husband, that they might get greater gain by uniting them to others. The little children looked for the mother who had given them nourishment, and for the father who bathed them in the stream; they found only barbarous tyrants, and they slept with the dogs!'

"He ceased: his lips moved without a sound; his look was fixed yet wandering. Suddenly he seized my arm.

"'Brother, do you hear me? I have been sold to various masters like a beast of the field. You remember the torture of Ogé; that day I saw my father once more, listen: he was upon the wheel!'

"I shuddered. He resumed:

"'My wife was prostituted by the whites. Hear me, brother; she is dead, and of me she has demanded vengeance. Shall I confess it?' he continued, hesitating and dropping his eyes, 'I have been guilty, I have loved another ——. But let that pass. All my followers urged me to free them and revenge myself. Rask brought me their messages. I could not satisfy them; I was myself your uncle's prisoner. The day

you obtained my pardon I set out to snatch my little children from the hands of a ferocious master; I reached the place. Brother, the last of the grandsons of the King of Kakongo had just expired under the blows of a white! the others had gone before him.'

"He stopped, and asked of me coldly:

"'Brother, what would you have done?'

"The sad story had chilled me with horror. I replied to his question with a threatening gesture. He understood me and smiled bitterly. He continued:

"'The slaves revolted against their masters, and punished them for the murder of my children. They elected me their chief. You know the evils which led to this rebellion. I learned that your uncle's negroes were preparing to follow the example. I arrived at the Acul upon the night of the insurrection. You were absent. Your uncle had been assassinated in his bed. The blacks were already firing the plantations. Unable to calm their fury, because they thought to avenge me by burning the estates of your uncle, I determined to save what remained of your family. I went into the Fort by the passage I had made. I confided the nurse of the family to a faithful black. I had more difficulty in

saving your Maria. She had hastened toward the burned quarter of the Fort to rescue from it the youngest of her brothers, who alone had survived the massacre. Some blacks had surrounded her; they were just about to kill her. I appeared and ordered them to leave me to my own revenge. They retired; I caught your wife in my arms, confided the child to Ŕask, and placed both in this cavern, the existence of and the path to which I alone knew. Brother, this is my crime.'

"Still more deeply penetrated with remorse and gratitude, I would again have cast myself at the feet of Pierrot; he checked me with an offended air.

"'Come,' said he a moment afterward, taking me by the hand, 'let us go; take your wife and let us go all five.'

"I asked him in amazement whither he would take us.

"'To the camp of the whites,' he replied. 'This retreat is no longer safe. To-morrow at day-break the whites will attack Biassou's camp; the forest will certainly be burned. And besides, we have not a moment to lose; ten heads are answering for mine. We can now make haste, for you are free; we must, for I am not.'

"These words increased my surprise; I asked what he meant.

"'Have you not heard it reported that Bug-Jargal is a prisoner?' said he impatiently.

"'Yes; but what have you in common with Bug-Jargal?'

"He seemed astonished in turn and answered gravely:

"'I am Bug-Jargal.'

CHAPTER XLVII.

"I was accustomed, so to speak, to surprises from this man. It was not without astonishment that I had a moment before seen the slave Pierrot transformed into an African king. My wonder was now intensified when I recognized in him the formidable and magnanimous Bug-Jargal, chief of the blacks of the Morne-Rouge. I now understood whence arose the respect paid by all the rebels and even by Biassou to the chief Bug-Jargal, to the King of Kakongo. He did not seem to perceive the impression produced upon me by his last words.

"'It was told,' said he, 'that you too were a prisoner in Biassou's camp. I came to deliver you.'

"'Why, then, did you not immediately tell me you were not free?'

"He looked at me as if seeking to divine what led to this quite natural question.

"'Listen,' said he: 'this morning I was a prisoner among your friends. I heard it announced

in the camp that Biassou had declared his intention of putting to death, before the setting of the sun, a young captive named Leopold D'Auverney. The guards about me were doubled. I learned that my execution would follow yours, and that in case of escape ten of my comrades would answer for me. You perceive I am in haste.'

"I still retained him. 'Then you escaped,' said I.

"'How else should I be here? Must I not save you? Do I not owe you my life? Come, follow me now. We are but one hour's march from the camp of the whites, the same as from Biassou's camp. See, the shadows of those cocoa trees are lengthening, and their round heads appear upon the grass like the enormous eggs of the condor. Within three hours the sun will have set. Come, brother, time presses.'

"'*Within three hours the sun will have set!*' These words, simple as they were, froze my blood like an apparition of death. They recalled the fatal promise I had made to Biassou. Alas! in recovering Marie, I had not thought of our speedy eternal separation; I had only been transported, intoxicated; my emotions had swept away my memory, and I had forgotten

my death in my happiness. The words of my friend in an instant threw me back suddenly into the depths of my wo. '*Within three hours the sun will have set!*' It required one hour to return to Biassou's camp. My duty was imperiously prescribed; the brigand had my word, and it were better to die than give the barbarian the right to despise the only thing he seemed yet to trust, the honor of a Frenchman.

"The alternative was fearful; I chose what I ought to choose; but I confess it, gentlemen, I hesitated for a moment. Was I guilty?

CHAPTER XLVIII.

"At length with a sigh I took in one hand the hand of Bug-Jargal, and in the other that of Marie, who was anxiously watching the ill-omened cloud that spread over my features.

"'Bug-Jargal,' said I with difficulty, 'I confide to you the only being in the world I love more than I do you, Marie. Return to the camp without me, for I cannot follow you.'

"'Good God!' said Marie gasping, 'what new calamity?'

"Bug-Jargal shuddered. Wretched astonishment was depicted in his eyes.

"'Brother, what are you saying?'

"The alarm which oppressed Marie at the very idea of the misfortune which her too prescient tenderness seemed to divine, made it obligatory on me to conceal from her the reality, and to spare her a farewell so heartrending; I bent toward the ear of Bug-Jargal and whispered:

"'I am a prisoner. I have sworn to Biassou

to return and place myself in his power two hours before the close of this day; I have promised to die.'

"He bounded with rage; his voice became terrible:

"'The monster! That, then, was why he wished to speak with you privately; it was to wring from you that promise. I ought to have distrusted this wretched Biassou. Why did I not foresee his perfidy? He is not a black; he is a mulatto.'

"'What is this? What perfidy? What promise?' exclaimed Marie terrified. 'Who is this Biassou?'

"'Silence!' repeated I to Bug-Jargal. 'Do not alarm Marie.'

"'Well,' he replied in a gloomy tone; 'but how could you consent to this promise? why did you give it?'

"'I thought you an ingrate. I believed Marie lost to me. What was life to me?'

"'But a promise of the lips cannot bind you to this brigand.'

"'I have given my word of honor.'

"He seemed to be seeking to discern my meaning.

"'Your word of honor? What is that, pray?

You did not drink from the same cup? You broke no ring, no red-flowering maple branch?'

"'No.'

"'Well! what are you saying? what can bind you?'

"'My honor,' I replied.

"'I know not what that means. Nothing binds you with Biassou. Come with us.'

"'I cannot, brother; I have promised.'

"'No! you have not promised,' said he earnestly; and then elevating his voice:

"'Sister, help me. Prevent your husband from leaving us; he would return to the camp of the negroes, whence I brought him, under the pretext that he has promised his life to their chief Biassou.'

"'What have you done?' cried I. It was too late to prevent the effect of this generous impulse, which made him implore for the life of his rival the aid of her whom he loved. Marie had thrown herself into my arms with a shriek of despair. Her hands, clasped about my neck, held her upon my breast, for she was powerless, and she almost ceased to breathe.

"'Oh!' murmured she in anguish, 'what is he saying, my Leopold? Is it not true that he is deceiving me, and that at the moment of our

re-union you will not abandon me for death? You are not going to leave me? to leave me that you may die? Answer me quickly or I shall die. You have no right to give up your life, because you ought not to give mine. You could not abandon me never to return.'

"'Marie,' I replied, 'fear not: I am really going to leave you; I must; but we shall meet again elsewhere.'

"'Elsewhere!' replied she with a shudder. 'Elsewhere! Where?'

"'In heaven,' I replied, not daring to lie to this angel.

"She fainted again, but it was of grief. Time pressed, my resolution was formed. I laid her in the arms of Bug-Jargal, whose eyes were filled with tears.

"'Can nothing detain you then?' said he. 'I would add nothing to what you see. How can you resist *Maria?* For a single one of the words she has spoken to you I would have sacrificed a world to her, and you will not sacrifice even your death?'

"'Honor!' replied I. 'Adieu, Bug-Jargal; adieu, brother; I bequeath her to you.'

"He took me by the hand; he was thoughtful, and seemed hardly to understand me.

"'Brother, in the camp of the whites is one of your relatives; I will take *Maria* to him. As for me, I cannot accept your legacy.'

"He pointed to a peak, the summit of which commanded all the surrounding country.

"'Do you see that rock? when the signal of your death appears there, the sound of mine will soon be heard. Adieu.'

"Without dwelling upon the unknown meaning of these last words, I embraced him. I left a kiss upon the pallid forehead of Marie, whom the attentions of her nurse began to revive, and fled precipitately, fearing lest her first look, her first murmur might take away all my resolution.

CHAPTER XLIX.

"I FLED away. I plunged into the depths of the forest, following the traces we had left, without even daring to cast a glance behind me. As if to stifle the thoughts which beset me, I ran without cessation across thickets, savannas and hills, until at last upon the crest of a rock, Biassou's camp, with its lines of advance guards, its rows of ajoupas, and its swarm of blacks, appeared before my eyes. There I halted. I had reached the limit of my course and of my existence. Fatigue and emotion had exhausted me; I leaned against a tree that I might not fall, and allowed my eyes to wander over the picture which was spread out at my feet in the fatal savannah.

"Before this time I thought I had tasted all cups of gall and bitterness. But I had not experienced the most cruel of all woes — to be driven by a moral force more powerful than that of circumstances, voluntarily to renounce felicity in the midst of happiness, life while all alive. A few hours before what was the world to me? I

lived not; extreme despair is a sort of death which makes us desire the actual.

"But from that despair I had been rescued. Marie had been restored to me; my dead happiness had been resuscitated, so to speak; my past had again become my future, and all my eclipsed dreams had reappeared more dazzling than ever; life, in short, a life of youth, love and enchantment was again spread out before me, radiant in a vast horizon. Such a life I could again begin, everything within and around me invited to enjoyment. There was no material obstacle, no fetter visible. I was free, I was happy, and yet I must die. I had taken but one step in this Eden, and a mysterious duty, which was not even brilliant, compelled me to retreat toward torture.

"Death is a little thing to a soul, withered and hardened, frozen by adversity; but how poignant is its hand, how cold it seems when it falls upon a heart blooming and warmed into new life by the joys of existence! I experienced it! for a moment I had gone out of the sepulchre; in that short moment I had been intoxicated with all that is most heavenly upon earth, love, devotion and liberty, and now I must suddenly redescend into the tomb!

CHAPTER L.

"When the exhaustion of regret was passed, a sort of rage seized me; with rapid strides I plunged into the valley; I felt that I must come quickly to the end. I presented myself at the advance posts of the negroes. They seemed surprised, and refused me admittance. Strange to say, I was almost compelled to beseech them. Two of them at last received me, and undertook to guide me to Biassou.

"I entered the cavern of the chief. He was engaged in testing the springs of some instruments of torture with which he was surrounded. At the noise made by his guards in introducing me, he turned his head; my presence seemed to astonish him.

"'Do you see?' said he, showing me the horrid apparatus about him.

"I remained calm. I knew the cruelty of the *hero of humanity*, and had resolved to endure all without blenching.

"'Is it not true,' continued he giggling, 'is

it not so, that Léogri was very lucky to get nothing but hanging?'

"Without a reply, I gave him a look of cold disdain.

"'Inform Mr. Chaplain,' said he to an aide-de-camp. We remained for a moment in silence, looking each other full in the face. I observed him, he watched me. Then Rigaud entered; he seemed agitated, and addressed the generalissimo in a low voice.

"'Assemble all the chiefs of my army,' said Biassou quietly. A quarter of an hour afterward all the chiefs, with their diversely grotesque costumes, were assembled in front of the grotto. Biassou arose.

"'Listen, *amigos!* the whites count upon attacking us here to-morrow at the break of day. The position is bad; we must abandon it. Let all be in motion by the setting of the sun, and let us gain the Spanish frontier. Macaya, you will form the vanguard with your maroon blacks; Padrejan, you will spike the pieces of artillery taken from Praloto; they cannot follow us in the hills. The braves of the Croix des Bouquets will move after Macaya. Toussaint will follow with the blacks of Léogane and the Trou. If the Griots or their women create the slightest

noise, I refer it to the executioner of the army. Lieutenant Colonel Cloud will distribute the muskets that were disembarked at Cape Cabron, and will conduct the heretofore free sang-mêlés by the paths of La Vista. Cut the throats of the prisoners, if any remain ; roughen the bullets ; poison the streams. Three tons of arsenic must be thrown into the spring from which the camp gets water ; the colonists will mistake it for sugar, and will drink it without distrust. The troops of the Limbé, the Dondon and the Acul will march in the rear of Cloud and Toussaint. Obstruct with rocks all the roads of the savanna ; lie in wait along all the paths ; burn the forests. Rigaud, you will remain near us ; Candi, you will muster my guard about me. The blacks of the Morne-Rouge will form the rear guard, and will not evacuate the savanna before sunrise.'

"He leaned toward Rigaud and added in a whisper: 'They are the blacks of Bug-Jargal ; if they could be crushed here! *Muerta la tropa, muerte el gefé!*'[1]

"'Go, *hermanos*,' said he, rising again. 'Candi will bring you the countersign.'

"The chiefs withdrew.

[1] Dead the band, dead the chief.

"'General,' said Rigaud, 'we must send off Jean François' dispatch. Our affairs are threatening; it might check the whites.'

"Biassou drew it quickly from his pocket.

"'You remind me of it; but there are so many grammatical errors, as they call them, that they will laugh at it.' He presented me the parchment. 'Listen! do you wish to save your life? my kindness asks it once more of your obstinacy. Aid me in re-writing this letter. I will dictate my ideas; you shall write them out in *white style*.'

"I shook my head. He seemed impatient.

"'Is that no?' said he.

"'No,' I replied.

"He did not give it up.

"'Consider well.' And his eye seemed to invite mine to the torturer's apparatus with which he had been playing.

"'It is because I have considered,' replied I, 'that I refuse. You seem to me to fear for yourself and your army; you count upon your letter to the Assembly to retard the march and vengeance of the whites. I do not desire a life which may perhaps serve to save yours. Begin your torture.'

"'Ah! ah! *muchacho!*' replied Biassou, push-

ing the instruments of torture with his foot, 'it seems you are familiar with this. I am sorry for it, but I have not the time to test them upon you. This position is a dangerous one; I must get out of it as soon as possible. So you refuse to serve me as secretary! Well, well; you are right, for I should none the less have put you to death afterward. He cannot live who has a secret of Biassou; and then, my dear friend, I have promised you to our chaplain.'

"He turned toward the obi, who had just entered.

"'*Bon per*, is your squad ready?'

"The latter assented with a nod.

"'Have you chosen the blacks of the Morne-Rouge? They are the only ones in the army who are not busy in preparation for departure.'

"The obi answered *Yes*, by another nod.

"Biassou then pointed to the large black flag I had already remarked, which figured in a corner of the grotto.

"'That will inform your friends of the moment when they can transfer your epaulette to your lieutenant. You perceive that then I shall be already upon the march. By the way, you have just come in from a promenade, how did you like the environs?'

"'I noticed,' replied I coldly, 'trees enough to hang you and all your band.'

"'Well, well,' replied he with a forced giggle, 'there is a spot you have not yet observed, to which the *bon per* will soon introduce you. Adieu, young captain; good night to Léogri.'

"He saluted me with this laugh which reminded me of the sound of a rattlesnake, made a gesture, turned his back on me, and the negroes hurried me away. The veiled obi attended us, chaplet in hand.

CHAPTER LI.

"I WALKED in the midst of them without offering any resistance; it is true that it would have been useless. We ascended the ridge of a mountain situated to the west of the savanna, where for a moment we rested; there I cast a last look upon this setting sun, which to me should never again rise. My guides arose; I followed them. We descended into a narrow valley, which at any other time would have enchanted me. A mountain torrent traversed its entire length, and made the soil moist and fertile; at the extremity of the valley the torrent plunged into one of those azure lakes which abound in the interior of the hilly country of San Domingo. How often in happier days I had sat down to dream upon the banks of those beautiful lakes, at the hour of twilight, when their azure changes into a sheet of silver, on which the reflection of the first stars of evening scatters spangles of gold! This hour would soon come, but it must pass! How beautiful

the valley seemed to me! there were plane trees of enormous trunk and height; thick bouquets of *mauritias*, a kind of palm, which excludes all other vegetation from beneath its shade, date trees, magnolias, with their large calices, enormous catalpas displaying their polished and carved leaves amid the golden clusters of the false ebony; the Canadian odier there mingled its pale yellow leaves with the blue auréoles which crown the species of honey-suckle called by the negroes *coali*. Verdant curtains of ivy concealed from view the brown sides of the neighboring rocks. From every quarter of this virgin soil arose a primitive perfume such as the first man might have inspired from the first roses of Eden.

"Meantime we were proceeding along a by-path which was traced upon the bank of the torrent. I was surprised to see this path suddenly cease at the foot of a perpendicular rock, at the base of which I observed an opening in the form of an arch, through which the torrent escaped. A hollow noise and a rushing wind came from this natural arch. The negroes took a road to the left, winding and unequal, which seemed to have been hollowed out by the waters of a torrent long since dried up. An archway

presented itself, half-closed with brambles, holly and wild-thorns shooting across it. A noise like that from the arch of the valley was audible in this opening. The blacks hurried me along toward it. At the moment I was taking my first steps in this subterranean cavity, the obi approached and said to me in a disguised voice:

"'Hear what I have to predict for you now; but one of us two will ever leave this archway and retrace this path.'

"I disdained to answer. We advanced in the darkness; the noise grew louder; we no longer heard footsteps. I judged that it must be produced by a waterfall; I was not mistaken.

"After ten minutes walk in the darkness, we reached a kind of interior table, formed by nature in the very centre of the mountain. The larger portion of this semi-circular platform was inundated by the torrent which leaped out from the veins of the mountain with a fearful roar. Above this subterranean hall the roof formed a sort of dome, which was hung with a yellowish ivy. The vault was traversed almost throughout its extent by a crevice, through which the light of day penetrated, and the edges of which were crowned with verdant shrubs, gilded at that moment with the rays of the sun. At the north

end of the rock table the torrent leaped with a roar into an abyss, in the depths of which the wandering light that came through the crevice seemed to float without being able to penetrate them. Over the abyss hung an aged tree, whose highest branches were covered with the foam of the cascade, and the gnarled trunk of which pierced the rock one or two feet beyond its edge. The tree, thus bathing at the same time in the torrent its head and its root, which hung over the abyss like a fleshless arm, was so bare of verdure that its species could not be distinguished. It presented a singular phenomenon,—the humidity which impregnated its roots was all that kept it from dying, while the violence of the cataract tore off its new branches and limited it to the same boughs forever.

CHAPTER LII.

"At this terrific spot the blacks halted, and I saw that I must die. Then, near this abyss into which I was in some sense voluntarily precipitating myself, the image of that felicity I had renounced a few hours before, recurred to me exciting regret and almost remorse. Entreaty was unworthy of me; however, a murmur escaped me:

"'Friends,' said I to the blacks who surrounded me, 'do you know how sad it is to perish at twenty, when a man is full of energy and life, when he is loved by those whom he loves, and when he leaves behind him eyes that will weep until they close forever?'

"A fiendish laugh answered my murmur. It came from the little obi. That evil spirit, that impenetrable being now approached me.

"'Ha! ha! ha! You are mourning for life. *Labado sea Dios.* My only distress was you would have no fear of death.'

"It was the same voice and the same laugh which had already wearied my conjectures.

"'Wretch!' said I, 'who are you?'

"'You will soon know,' replied he in a terrible tone. Then removing the silver sun which covered his brown breast: 'Read.'

"I bent down to him. Two names were engraved upon the hairy bosom of the obi in whitish letters, hideous and ineffaceable traces, stamped with a red-hot iron upon the breasts of slaves. One of these names was *Effingham*, the other was that of my uncle and myself, *D'Auverney*. I was struck dumb with surprise.

"'Well, Leopold D'Auverney,' asked the obi, 'does your name tell you mine?'

"'No,' replied I, astonished to hear my name from this man, seeking to refresh my memory. 'Those two names were never united upon any other breast than that of the buffoon. But he is dead, the poor dwarf; and besides he was attached to us. You cannot be Habibrah?'

"'Himself!' cried he in a terrible voice; and raising his bloody *gorra* he detached his veil. The deformed features of the house dwarf were exposed to my eyes; but to the air of foolish gayety, which I had always seen in him, had succeeded an expression of menace and of malignity.

"'Great God!' I exclaimed, struck with stupor,

'are all the dead coming to life? This is Habibrah, my uncle's buffoon.'

"The dwarf placed his hand upon his dagger, and said sullenly: 'His buffoon,—and his murderer.'

"I recoiled with horror.

"'His murderer!— Hell-hound! Is it thus then you repay his favors?'

"He interrupted me: 'His favors! Say his outrages!'

"What!' I continued, 'it was you who stabbed him, wretch?'

"He replied with a horrid expression: 'I, myself! I buried the knife so deep in his heart that he hardly had time to open his eyes out of sleep before he closed them in death. He called feebly: "*Come here, Habibrah!*"—I was there.'

"His atrocious story, his atrocious coolness shocked me. 'Wretch! Cowardly assassin! Have you then forgotten the favors he bestowed only upon you? You ate by his table, you slept by his bed ——'

"'Like a dog,' interrupted Habibrah sharply, '*como un perro!* Yes, I remember too well those favors, which are insults! I have avenged myself upon him for it; I am going to avenge myself upon you! Listen! Think you that in

being a mulatto, a dwarf and deformed, I am not a man? Oh! I have a soul, and a soul far deeper and stronger than that which I am going to deliver from your girlish body. I was given to your uncle like a marmoset. I served his pleasures; I amused his spleen. He loved me, you say; I had a place in his heart; yes, between his monkey and his parrot. I chose another with my dagger.'

"I shuddered.

"'Yes,' resumed the dwarf, 'it is I, it is really I; look me in the face, Leopold D'Auverney. You have laughed at me enough, now you can tremble. And, say, you remind me of the shameful predilection of your uncle for him whom he called his buffoon! What a predilection, *bon Giu!* If I entered your drawing-rooms a thousand disdainful smiles saluted me; my stature, my deformities, my features, my ludicrous costume, even the lamentable infirmities of my nature, everything in me, my whole being, was a butt for the raillery of your execrable uncle and his execrable friends. And for myself, I could not even be silent; I must, *O rabia!* I must mingle my laugh with those I excited! Answer me; do you believe that such humiliations demand the gratitude of any human creature? Do you

believe that they were not equal to the woes of the other slaves: incessant labor, the scorching of the sun, the iron collar, and the scourge of the overseers? Think you that they were not enough to produce in a man's heart a burning hatred, implacable and eternal, like the stigma of infamy which brands my breast? Alas! that for such lengthened sufferings my revenge was so short! that I could not have made my odious tyrant endure every torture which was renewed for me every moment of every day! that he could not, before his death, have known the bitterness of wounded pride, and felt what searing traces tears of infamy and rage leave upon a countenance which is condemned to perpetual grimace! Alas! it is hard, indeed, to have so long awaited the hour of vengeance, and to finish it by one dagger stroke! If he could only have known the hand that struck him? But I was too impatient to hear his last agony; I stabbed him too soon; he died without recognizing me, and my fury cheated my revenge! But this time it shall be more complete! You see me clearly; do you not? It is true that you must hardly recognize me under this new light which exhibits me to you. You have never seen me except under an appearance of joy and laughter; now that nothing

forbids my soul from appearing in my eyes, I ought not to resemble my former self. You know only my mask; behold my face!'

"It was horrible!

"'Monster,' I cried, 'you deceive yourself. There is still something of the buffoon in the atrocity of your features and your heart.'

"'Speak not of atrocity,' interrupted Habibrah. 'Think of the cruelty of your uncle——'

"'Wretch,' I replied, indignantly, 'if he was cruel, it was because of you! You complain of the lot of the unfortunate slaves; but why then did you turn against your brothers the confidence which the weakness of your master placed in you? Why did you never attempt to influence him in their favor?'

"'I would have been ashamed of it. I prevent a white from staining himself by an atrocity! No, no! I urged him on the contrary to increase the severity of the treatment of his slaves in order to hasten the hour of revolt, and that the excess of oppression might lead at last to vengeance! Seeming to injure my brethren I served them.'

"I was struck dumb at so deeply plotted hatred.

"'Well,' continued the dwarf, 'do you think

now that I know how to plan and execute? What say you of the buffoon Habibrah? What say you of your uncle's fool?'

"'Accomplish what you have begun so well,' I replied. 'Kill me, but make haste.'

"He began to walk back and forth upon the rock rubbing his hands.

"'But what if it does not please me to make haste? What if I would enjoy your anguish at my leisure? You see, Biassou owed me my portion of the booty of the last pillage. As soon as I saw you in the camp of the blacks I demanded your life only. He willingly gave it to me and now it is mine! I am amusing myself with it. You will soon follow this cascade into that abyss, rest assured; but I must first tell you, that having discovered the retreat where your wife is concealed, I have this day instigated Biassou to burn the forest. The work is to be commenced now. Thus, your race is ended. Your uncle fell by the steel; you will perish by water; your Marie by fire!'

"'Wretch! wretch!' I exclaimed. And I made a motion to throw myself upon him. He turned toward the negroes:

"'Come, bind him! His hour approaches.'

"Then the negroes silently began to bind me

with cords they had brought. All at once I thought I heard the distant barkings of a dog; but I took the noise for an illusion caused by the roaring of the cascade. The negroes finished tying me and were pushing me toward the abyss in which I was to be engulfed. The dwarf, crossing his arms, gave me a look of triumphant joy. I raised my eyes toward the crevice to escape his horrid sight and to see the sky once more.

"At that moment a bark, deeper and clearer than before, was heard. The enormous head of Rask passed through the opening. I started. The dwarf cried out, '*Make haste!*' The blacks, who had not noticed the barking, were preparing to launch me into the midst of the abyss ——.

CHAPTER LIII.

"'COMRADES!' cried a voice of thunder.

"Every one turned back; it was Bug-Jargal. He was standing on the edge of the crevice; a red plume waved upon his head.

"'Comrades,' he repeated, 'stop!'

"The blacks fell prostrate. He continued:

"'I am Bug-Jargal.'

"The blacks beat their foreheads on the ground, uttering cries the import of which it was difficult to distinguish.

"'Unbind the prisoner,' cried the chief.

"Here the dwarf seemed to wake from the stupor into which this unexpected appearance had thrown him. Suddenly he seized the hands of the blacks who were just ready to cut my cords.

"'How! What is this?' he exclaimed. '*Que quiere decir eso?*' Then raising his head toward Bug-Jargal, 'Chief of the Morne-Rouge, for what do you come here?'

"'I am come,' Bug-Jargal replied, 'to command my brethren.'

"'Indeed,' replied the dwarf, with suppressed rage, 'they are blacks of the Morne-Rouge. But by what right,' added he, raising his voice, 'do you dispose of my prisoner!'

"The chief replied: 'I am Bug-Jargal.'

"The blacks beat their foreheads against the ground.

"'Bug-Jargal,' continued Habibrah, 'cannot undo what Biassou has done. This white was given me by Biassou. I wish him to die; he will die.'

"'*Vosotros*,' said he to the blacks. 'Obey! throw him into the abyss.'

"At the obi's potent voice the blacks arose and advanced toward me. I thought it was all over.

"'Unbind the prisoner,' cried Bug-Jargal. Then he gave a volley of imprecations and threats. In a twinkling I was free. My surprise equaled the rage of the obi. He attempted to fling himself upon me; the blacks stopped him.

"'*Demonios! rabia! infierno de mi alma!* What, wretches, you refuse to obey me, you disown *mi voz!* Why did I waste *el tiempo* in listening to *este maldicho!* I ought to have thrown him instantly to the fishes *del baratro!* I have so wished my revenge complete that I lose it. *O rabia de Satan! Escuchate vosotros!* If you do not obey me; if you do not hurl this

accursed white into the torrent, I will curse you! Your hair shall become white; musquitos and gnats shall devour you alive; your legs and arms shall bend like reeds; your breath shall burn your throats like hot sand; you shall soon die, and your souls shall be condemned forever to turn the wheels of a mill as large as a mountain in the moon, where it is very cold.'

"This scene had a strange effect upon me. Alone of my race, in that dark damp cavern, surrounded by negroes, like so many demons, suspended, as it were, over the brink of this bottomless pit, now threatened by this hideous dwarf, this misshapen sorcerer, whose parti-colored dress and pointed mitre were scarcely discernible in the pallid light; and now protected by the gigantic black, who appeared at the only point where the heavens could be seen, it seemed as if I were at the gates of hell, awaiting the destruction or the salvation of my soul, and witnessing a stubborn struggle between my good angel and my evil genius.

"The blacks seemed terrified by the maledictions of the obi. He sought to profit by their indecision, and he cried out:

"'I desire that the white die. He shall die.'

"Bug-Jargal replied gravely: 'He shall live!

I am Bug-Jargal. My father was a king in the country of Kakongo, and administered justice before his gate.'

"The blacks again fell prostrate. The chief continued:

"'Brothers! Go, tell Biassou not to display upon the mountain the black flag which is to announce to the whites the death of this captive, for this captive has saved Bug-Jargal's life, and Bug-Jargal wishes him to live.'

"They rose again. Bug-Jargal flung his red plume into the midst of them. The chief of the detachment crossed his arms over his breast, and reverently took up the plume; they then departed without uttering a word. The obi disappeared with them in the shades of the subterraneous path.

"I will not endeavor, gentlemen, to depict to you the situation in which I found myself. I fixed my moist eyes on Pierrot, who, upon his part, watched me with a singular expression of gratitude and pride.

"'God be praised,' said he at last, 'all is saved. Brother, return by the path you came. You will find me in the valley.'

"He made me a signal with his hand and went away.

CHAPTER LIV.

"EAGER to reach the rendezvous, and to learn by what marvellous good fortune my savior had been led back so opportunely, I prepared to leave the terrible cavern.

"New dangers, however, were in store for me. Just as I was directing my steps toward the subterranean gallery, an unforeseen obstacle barred the way. It was Habibrah again. The spiteful obi had not followed the negroes, as I had thought; he had concealed himself behind a pile of rocks, awaiting a moment more favorable to his vengeance. That moment had come.

"The dwarf appeared suddenly, grinning. I was alone and unarmed. A dagger, the same which he used for a crucifix, glistened in his hand. At this sight I involuntarily recoiled.

"'Ha! ha! *maldicho!* So you thought to escape me! But the fool is less a fool than you. I have got you, and this time I will not make you wait. Nor shall your friend Bug-Jargal wait in vain. You shall go to the rendezvous in the

valley, but the waters of this torrent shall take you there.'

"So saying he rushed at me with uplifted dagger.

"'Monster!' said I, drawing back over the table rock, 'hitherto you have been only an executioner, now you are an assassin!'

"'Revenge!' he replied, gnashing his teeth.

"At that moment I was on the brink of the precipice; he dashed eagerly upon me to push me over by a stroke of his dagger. I dodged aside. His foot slipped upon the slippery moss with which the moist rocks are covered; he rolled down the slope that had been rounded by the waters.

"'A thousand demons!' cried he, roaring with rage; he had fallen into the abyss.

"I have told you that a root of the old tree protruded from the clefts of the granite a little beneath the edge. The dwarf hit it in his fall; his spangled skirt became entangled in the knots of the stump, and seizing upon this forlorn hope he clung to it with amazing energy. His pointed cap fell from his head; he had to drop his dagger, and this assassin's weapon and the buffoon's tinkling gorra disappeared together, striking against each other in the depths of the cataract.

"Habibrah, suspended over this horrible abyss, tried at first to get back upon the table rock; but his little arms could not reach the crest of the slope, and his nails were soon worn off in powerless efforts to hold by the viscous surface of the rock, which sloped down into the dark abyss. He howled with rage.

"The least effort on my part would have been sufficient to hurl him headlong; but it would have been cowardly, and I did not dream of it for a moment. This moderation struck him. Thanking heaven for the salvation which had been so unexpectedly sent to me, I had decided to abandon him to his fate, and I was about to leave the subterranean hall, when all at once I heard the voice of the dwarf rise out of the abyss in suppliant and mournful tones.

"'Master!' cried he, 'master, do not go away, mercy! In the name of the *bon Giu*, leave not a human creature, whom you can save, to die impenitent and guilty. Alas! my strengh is failing me; the branch slips and bends in my hands, the weight of my body is dragging me down; I must let go of it, or it will break—Alas! master, this frightful gulf is boiling below me. *Nombre santo de Dios!* Will you have no pity on your poor buffoon? He is very guilty,

but will you not show him that the whites are better than the mulattoes, the masters than their slaves?'

"I had returned to the edge of the precipice almost persuaded, and the glimmer of light which came down from the crevice, exhibited upon the loathsome features of the dwarf an expression I had never seen on it before; one of prayer and agony.

"'*Señor* Leopold,' he continued, encouraged by this indication of pity, 'is it true that a human being can see his neighbor in such a horrible position, be able to help him and not do it? Alas, reach me your hand, master! I need but little aid to save me. What is all things to me, is so little for you! Draw me up to you for God's sake. My gratitude shall equal my crimes.'

"I interrupted him: 'Wretch, recall not their memory.'

"'It is to detest them, master!' continued he. 'Oh, be more generous than I! Oh heaven! Oh heaven! I am failing, I am falling! *Ay desdichado!* The hand! — your hand! Give me your hand! in the name of the mother who bore you!'

"I cannot describe to you how lamentable was his voice with terror and with suffering. I forgot

all. He was no longer an enemy, a traitor, an assassin; he was only an unfortunate whom a slight effort on my part could rescue from a frightful death. He implored me so piteously! Any word, any reproach would have been useless and ridiculous; the need of assistance seemed urgent. I. bent down, and kneeling on the edge, with one of my hands against the trunk of the tree, the root of which sustained the unhappy Habibrah, I gave him the other. As soon as it came within his reach, he seized it by both hands with amazing strength, and so far from aiding in the upward movement which I sought to give him, I felt that he was trying to drag me down with him into the abyss. Had not the trunk of the tree afforded me such firm support, I should have been drawn inevitably over the brink by the violent and unexpected shock which the wretch gave me.

"'Villain!' I exclaimed, 'what are you doing?'

"'Revenge!' he replied, with a burst of infernal laughter.

"'Ah, I have got you at last! Imbecile! you have betrayed yourself! I have got you! You were saved; I was lost; and now you come voluntarily back into the jaws of the alligator, because he groaned after he had roared! I am

content, for my death is a revenge. You are caught in the snare, *amigo*, and I shall have a human companion among the fishes of the lake.'

"'Ah, traitor!' said I, struggling, 'this is your recompense for my willingness to rescue you from danger!'

"'Yes,' he replied; 'I know I could save myself with you, but I prefer that you should perish with me. I prefer your death to my life. Come!'

"At the same time his brown and callous hands clutched mine with wonderful force; his eyes flashed, his lips foamed; his strength, the loss of which he was a moment before so grievously deploring, returned to him intensified by rage and vengeance; his feet were braced like two levers against the perpendicular face of the rock, and he bounded like a tiger upon the root, which, entangled in his dress, sustained him in spite of himself; for he tried to break it so as to fall with all his weight on me, and drag me down more quickly. Several times he interrupted the hideous laugh which his monstrous countenance displayed, in order to bite the root savagely. You would have said it was the horrible demon of this cavern seeking to

drag his prey down into his palace of darkness and abysses.

"Fortunately one of my knees had caught in a crack of the rock; my arm was partially held by the tree which supported me, and I struggled against the efforts of the dwarf with all the energy which the instinct of self-preservation can give in such a moment. From time to time I raised my breast with difficulty, and called out with all my strength, *Bug-Jargal!* But the roar of the cascade, and the distance, left me very little hope that he could hear my voice.

"Meantime, the dwarf, who had not expected so great resistance, redoubled his furious efforts. I began to lose my strength, though this struggle lasted much less time than I have taken to recount it. An unendurable pain paralyzed my arm; my sight began to grow dim; livid and confused glimmers played before my eyes; a buzzing filled my ears. I heard the root crack as it began to break, and the monster laugh as he was ready to fall, and it seemed to me that the howling abyss was approaching me.

"Before abandoning myself to exhaustion and despair, I made a final effort. I collected all my waning strength, and cried once more, *Bug-Jargal!* A bark answered me.

"I recognized Rask; I turned my head. Bug-Jargal and his dog were at the edge of the crevice. I know not whether he had heard my voice or whether his anxiety had brought him back. He saw my danger.

"'Hold fast!' cried he.

"Habibrah, fearing my rescue, cried to me from below, foaming with fury: 'Come now! Come!'

"And he collected for a final effort the remnant of his supernatural strength. Just then my exhausted arm lost its grasp upon the tree. It was all over with me, when I felt that I was seized from behind; it was Rask!

"At a signal from his master he had leaped from the crevice down upon the table rock, and his jaws held me firmly by the skirts of my coat. Habibrah had spent all his strength in his last effort; I summoned up mine again to withdraw my hand from him. His stiff and swollen fingers were at last compelled to let me go; the root, which had been cracking so long, broke under his weight, and while Rask pulled me backward by main strength, the wretched dwarf was engulfed in the foam of the dark cascade, throwing up at me a curse which I did not hear, and which fell back with him into the abyss.

"Such was the end of my uncle's buffoon.

CHAPTER LV.

"THIS fearful scene, this demoniac struggle, its terrible denouement, overwhelmed me. I was almost powerless and senseless. The voice of Bug-Jargal recalled me to life.

"'Brother,' he cried, 'make haste to leave this spot! The sun will set in half an hour. I will await you below. Follow Rask.'

"His friendly words at once restored to me hope, strength and courage. I arose. The dog bounded rapidly into the subterranean path. I followed him. His bark guided me through the darkness. After a few moments I saw day-light again before me; at length we reached the exit and I breathed freely. As I went out of the black and humid archway, I recalled the prediction of the dwarf at the moment we entered it: 'But one of us two will retrace this path.' His expectation had been deceived but his prophecy had been fulfilled.

CHAPTER LVI.

"On reaching the valley I found Bug-Jargal. I threw myself into his arms unable to speak though I had a thousand questions to ask him.

"'Listen,' said he, 'your wife, my sister, is in safety. I have taken her to the camp of the whites, to one of your relatives who commands the advance guard. I was anxious to surrender myself a prisoner lest they should sacrifice in my stead the ten hostages who answer for me. Your relative told me to escape and endeavor to prevent your death, as the ten blacks would only be executed if you were, which Biassou was to announce by displaying a black flag upon the highest of our mountains. Then I hurried to you, Rask guided me, and I arrived in time, thank heaven. You will live, and I also.'

"He held out his hand and added: 'Brother, are you happy?'

"I clasped him again in my arms; I conjured him not to leave me, to stay, live with me

among the whites: I promised him a position in the Colonial army. He interrupted me sharply:

"'Brother, did I ever propose to you to enroll yourself in my band?'

"I was silent; I felt that I was wrong. He added pleasantly:

"'Come, let us hasten to see and reassure your wife.'

"This proposition echoed the urgent demand of my heart; I arose intoxicated with happiness; we set out. The black knew the way; he walked before me; Rask followed us!——"

Here D'Auverney stopped and looked gloomily about him. Great drops of sweat rolled down his forehead. He covered his face with his hand. Rask watched him with a restless look.

"Yes, this is the way you used to watch me," he murmured.

A moment afterward he arose violently agitated and left the tent. The Sergeant and the dog followed him.

CHAPTER LVII.

"I'LL wager," exclaimed Henri, "that we are drawing near the catastrophe. I shall be very much vexed if anything happens to Bug-Jargal; he was a famous man!"

Paschal took from his lips the mouth of his osier-covered bottle, as he added:

"I would give a dozen baskets of port to see the cocoa-nut shell he drained at a draught."

Alfred, who was musing to the sound of a guitar, stopped and begged Lieutenant Henri to tie up his tags.

"This negro," added he, "interests me very much. Only I have not yet dared to ask D'Auverney if he knew also the air of *la Hermosa Padilla*."

"Biassou is much more remarkable," continued Paschal; "his tarry wine could not have been much, but at least he knew what a Frenchman is. Had I been his prisoner I would have let my mustache grow, so that he might lend me a few dollars on it, as the city of Goa did to the

Portuguese Captain. I assure you, my creditors are even more pitiless than Biassou."

"By the way, Captain, there are four louis I owe you," exclaimed Henri, throwing his purse to Paschal.

The Captain looked with astonished eyes at his generous debtor, who might more justly have been termed his creditor. Henri hastily resumed:

"Come, gentlemen; what think you so far of the story the Captain is telling us? the tale our Captain has rehearsed?"

"Upon my word," said Alfred, "I have not listened very attentively, but I confess I should have expected something more interesting from those dreamy lips of D'Auverney. And then there is a ballad in prose, and I do not like ballads in prose; what air can we sing it to? Finally, the story of Bug-Jargal wearies me; it is too long."

"You are right," said the aide-de-camp Paschal, "it is too long. If I had not had my pipe and my flask by my side I should have passed a bad night. Notice, besides, how many absurdities it contains. How can we believe, for example, that that little baboon of a sorcerer, that what's his name! — *Hudibras?* how can we believe that he would be willing to drown himself in order to drown his enemy——"

Henri interrupted him with a smile. "In water especially! Is not that so, Captain Paschal? For my part, what amused me most during this recital of D'Auverney, was to see his lame dog raise his head every time he pronounced the name of Bug-Jargal."

"And in that," Paschal interrupted, "he did just the opposite of what I have seen the good old women of Celadas do, when the priest uttered the name of Jesus; I was going into the church with a dozen cuirassiers ——"

The sound of the sentinel's musket announced that D'Auverney was returning. All were silent. He walked backward and forward for some time with his arms folded and in silence.

Old Thaddeus, who had sat down again in a corner, secretly watched him, and endeavored to seem to be engaged caressing Rask so that the Captain might not perceive his embarrassment.

At length D'Auverney continued:

CHAPTER LVIII.

"RASK followed us. The highest cliff of the valley was no longer illumined by the sun; suddenly a gleam was seen and passed away.

"The black shuddered; he pressed my hand warningly.

"'Listen,' said he.

"A low sound, like the discharge of a piece of artillery, was then heard in the valleys, prolonged by echo after echo.

"'It is the signal,' said the negro in a gloomy voice. He continued: 'That is a cannon shot, is it not?'

"I nodded affirmatively.

"At two bounds he reached a lofty crag. I followed him. He crossed his arms and began to smile sadly.

"'Do you see?' said he to me.

"I looked in the direction he indicated, and I saw the peak he had shown me at the time of my interview with Marie, the only one upon

which the sun was still shining, surmounted by a huge black flag."

Here D'Auverney paused.

"I have since learned that Biassou, in his haste to depart, and believing me dead, had displayed the standard before the return of the detachment which was to execute me.

"Bug-Jargal was still standing there with his arms crossed, gazing at the terrible flag. Suddenly he turned quickly and took a few steps, as if to descend the rock.

"'Oh, God! oh God! My poor companions!' He returned to me. 'Did you hear the cannon?' he asked.

"I made no answer.

"'Well, brother, it was the signal. They are leading them out now.'

"His head fell upon his breast. He again approached me.

"'Go and find your wife, brother; Rask will lead you.'

"He whistled an African air; the dog wagged his tail and seemed anxious to go toward a certain point in the valley. Bug-Jargal seized my hand and endeavored to smile, but his smile was convulsive.

"'Farewell,' cried he with a firm voice, and he

disappeared beneath the tufts of trees which surrounded us.

"I was petrified. The little I comprehended of what had happened, suggested all manner of ills. Rask, seeing his master disappear, advanced to the edge of the rock and began to shake his head with a plaintive howl. He returned with fallen tail; his large eyes were moist; he looked at me restlessly, then he returned toward the spot where his master had disappeared and barked several times. I understood him; I had the same fears as he. I walked a few steps by his side, then he darted off like an arrow, following the track of Bug-Jargal; I should soon have lost sight of him, though I too ran with all my strength, had he not, from time to time, halted to give me an opportunity to come up with him. In this way we traversed several valleys, we crossed hills covered with thick wood. At length ——"

The voice of D'Auverney ceased. The gloom of despair seemed to settle over all his features; he could hardly articulate these words:

"Go on, Thaddeus, for I have no more strength than an old woman."

The old Sergeant was no less agitated than his Captain; he began, however, to obey.

"By your leave ——, since you desire it, Captain. I must tell you, officers, that although Bug-Jargal, otherwise called Pierrot, was a noble negro, very affectionate, very strong, very bold, and the first brave of the land, after you, if you please, Captain, I was none the less incensed against him, for which I shall never forgive myself, though my Captain has pardoned me. So that, Captain, after learning that your death was fixed for the evening of the second day, I got into a fit of rage against this poor man, and it was with an infernal pleasure that I announced to him that either he or ten of his companions should keep you company, and should be shot, as we say, by way of reprisal. At this announcement he manifested nothing, except that an hour afterward he escaped by making a large hole ——"

D'Auverney made a gesture of impatience. Thaddeus proceeded:

"Yes! When we saw the great black flag upon the mountain, as he had not returned, which astonished us, by your leave, officers, we took the discharge of the cannon for the signal, and I was commanded to conduct the ten negroes to the place of execution, called the Great Devil's Mouth, distant from the camp about —— Well,

what matters that! When we got there, you understand, gentlemen, that it was not to give them a chance to escape. I had them bound as usual, and I was arranging my platoons. Just then I saw the grand negro come in from the forest. My arms dropped by my sides. He came up to me all breathless.

"'I am in time,' said he. 'Good day, Thaddeus.'

"No, gentlemen, that was all he said, and off he went to release his compatriots. I was there myself dumb with astonishment. Then, by your leave, Captain, there began a great struggle of generosity between the blacks and himself, which might well have lasted a little longer — No matter! yes, I blame myself for it; it was I who stopped it. He took the place of the blacks. Just then his big dog — poor Rask! — he came and seized me by the throat. He might well have held on a few moments longer. But Pierrot made a signal, and the poor dog released me; Bug-Jargal could not, however, prevent him from going and lying down at his feet. Then I thought you dead, Captain —— I was enraged —— I cried ——"

The Sergeant raised his hand and looked at the Captain, but could not articulate the fatal word.

"Bug-Jargal fell. A ball shattered the paw of his dog. From that time, officers," (and the Sergeant shook his head sadly,) "from that time he has been lame. I heard groans in the neighboring wood. I searched; it was you, Captain; a ball had struck you just as you were coming to save the noble negro. Yes, Captain, you were groaning, but it was for him. Bug-Jargal was dead! You, Captain, were carried to the camp. You were less dangerously wounded than he, for you recovered, thanks to the good care of Madame Marie."

The Sergeant ceased. D'Auverney, in a solemn and painful tone, repeated:

"Bug-Jargal was dead."

Thaddeus bowed his head. "Yes," said he, "and he left me to live, and it was I who killed him."

THE END OF BUG-JARGAL.

NOTE.

As READERS generally have a habit of demanding final information as to the fate of each of the personages in whom it has been attempted to interest them, researches have been made with a view to gratify this habit as to the ultimate fate of Captain Leopold D'Auverney, his Sergeant and his dog. The reader, perhaps, recollects that the gloomy melancholy of the Captain proceeded from two causes, the death of Bug-Jargal, or Pierrot, and the loss of his dear Marie, who was rescued from the conflagration of Fort Galifet only to perish soon afterward in the first conflagration of the Cape. As to the Captain himself thus much has been discovered in regard to him:

On the day after a great battle, gained by the troops of the French Republic over the army of Europe, Major-General M——, who had the chief command, was in his tent alone, making up from the notes of his chief of staff the report which was to be sent to the National Convention of the victory of the previous day. An aide-de-camp came in to announce that the Representative of the people commissioned to accompany the army, would speak with him. The General abhorred these ambassadors in red caps, whom The Mountain sent into camps to degrade and decimate them: official informers, deputed by executioners to play the spy upon glory. However, it would have been dangerous to refuse to see one of them, especially after a victory. The bloody idol of those days was fond of illustrious victims; and the sacrificial priests of the Place de la Révolution were exultant when by the same stroke they could cut off a head and a crown, were it only one of thorns, like that of Louis XVI, of flowers, like those of the maidens of Verdun, or of laurels, like those of Custine and André Chénier. The General, therefore, ordered that the Representative be introduced.

After a few ambiguous and guarded felicitations upon the recent triumph of the Republican arms, the Representative, approaching the General, said in an undertone:

"That is not all, Citizen General; it is not enough to conquer our enemies abroad, we must also exterminate our enemies at home."

"What do you mean, Citizen Representative?" replied the astonished General.

"There is in your army," continued the Commissioner of the Convention, mysteriously, "a Captain, Leopold D'Auverney by name; he serves in the thirty-second demi-brigade. General, do you know him?"

"Yes, indeed I do," answered the General. "I have just been reading a report of the Adjutant-General commanding the thirty-second demi-brigade, which refers to him. In him the thirty-second had an excellent Captain."

"What, Citizen General!" said the Representative proudly. "Have you assigned him another grade?"

"I will not conceal the fact, Citizen Representative, that such was really my intention ——"

Here the Commissioner interrupted the General fiercely: "Victory blinds you, General M——! Take care what you do and what you say. If you warm in your bosom those serpents who are the enemies of the people, tremble lest the people crush you when they crush the serpents. This Leopold D'Auverney is

an aristocrat, a counter-revolutionist, a royalist, a Feuillant, a Girondist! Public justice demands him. He must be delivered to me forthwith."

The General replied coldly: "I cannot."

"What! you cannot!" continued the Representative, with redoubled rage. "Are you ignorant, General M——, that there is no unlimited power here but mine? The Republic commands you, and you cannot! Listen to me: I will, out of condescension in consequence of your success, read you the note which has been given me in regard to this D'Auverney, and which I must return with his body to the public accuser. It is extracted from a list of names, which you would not force me to end with yours. Listen: 'LEOPOLD AUVERNEY (ci-devant DE), captain in 'the thirty-second demi-brigade, convicted, *primo*, of having related in a conventicle of conspirators a fictitious counter-revolutionary story, tending to ridicule the 'principles of equality and liberty, and to exalt the ancient superstitions known 'under the names of *royalty* and *religion;* convicted, *secundo*, of having employed 'expressions condemned by all good *sans-culottes* to characterize divers memorable events, especially the enfranchisement of the late blacks of San Domingo; 'convicted, *tertio*, of having always used the word *monsieur* in his story, and 'never the word *citizen;* finally, *quarto*, of having, by the story aforesaid, conspired for the overthrow of the Republic, in favor of the faction of the Girondists 'and Brissotists. He deserves death!' Well! General, what do you say to that? Will you still protect this traitor! Will you hesitate to deliver up this enemy of the country to punishment?"

"This enemy of the country," replied the General with dignity, "has sacrificed his life to her. To the extract from your report I will reply by an extract from mine; listen in turn: 'LEOPOLD D'AUVERNEY, captain in the thirty-second demi-'brigade, decided the late victory which our arms has obtained. A formidable 'redoubt had been thrown up by the allies; it was the key of the battle; it must 'be carried. The death of the brave who should first attack it, was certain. 'Captain D'Auverney sacrificed himself; he took the redoubt, was killed, and we 'conquered. Sergeant Thaddeus, of the thirty-second, and a dog were found dead 'beside him. We propose to the National Convention to decree that Captain 'Leopold D'Auverney has deserved well of his country.' You see, Representative," continued the General quietly, "the difference between our messages; we are both, each in our own way, sending a list to the Convention. The same name is found in the two lists. You send it in as the name of a traitor, I as that of a hero; you devote him to ignominy, I to glory; you erect a scaffold, I a trophy: each plays his part. It is fortunate, however, that this brave man has escaped your tortures in battle. Thanks be to God, he whom you would have put to death is dead! He did not wait for you."

The Commissioner, enraged to see his conspiracy vanish with his conspirator, muttered between his teeth: "Dead? What a pity!"

The General heard him, and exclaimed indignantly: "You have one resort left, Citizen Representative of the people. Go, seek out the body of Captain D'Auverney among the ruins of the redoubt. Who knows? The enemy's balls may perhaps have spared the head of the corpse for the national guillotine!"